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TUESDAY 2 JANUARY 1996



Messing about on the river Nothing quite like it: Competitors strike out into the silt of the Blackwater Estuary at the start of the annual Mud Race, held in Maldon, Essex. This is the second year that the 'runners' have braved the chilly course, and the race attracted 133 contestants, with many running for charitable causes Messing about, page 3 Photograph: Peter Davies

Portillo pours salt into Tory party wounds

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

Michael Portillo, the right-wing Secretary of State for Defence, blew apart the Prime Minister's attempt to hold his party together yesterday, when he provoked Conservative moderates by appearing to welcome Emma Nicholson's defection to the Liberal Democrats.

Mr Portillo, whose "xenophobic" Tory party conference speech in October was cited by Ms Nicholson as one of the causes of her departure, said: "If she wants a United States of Europe then of course she is right to leave the Conservatives, who are opposed to it."

Tory MPs who share Ms Nicholson's pro-European views were incensed. "I am very surprised that of all people the Government should put up Michael Portillo - able as he is - on this particular issue. He represents to a very large extent

the very worrying tilt to the right about which many of us are concerned," said Peter Temple-Morris, the One Nation Tory MP for Leominster and close associate of Ms Nicholson's until her defection last Friday.

He just stopped short of calling for Mr Portillo to be sacked. "I wouldn't like to see anyone leave the Cabinet, I would just like them to behave as if they were one Cabinet, visibly for all to see," Mr Temple-Morris said.

A spokeswoman for Tory Central Office said Mr Portillo's interview with the BBC's *Today* programme, by telephone from the Arabian Gulf, had not been arranged through the office.

The reopening of the left-right split made an inauspicious start to the New Year for John Major, who had hoped last year's leadership election would put an end to the infighting. Ms Nicholson's defection and the renewed squabbling it has provoked only served to underline

the tenuousness of his grip on power. Ministers accept that the Government is likely to lose its Commons majority during the year. However, the Prime Minister has vowed to fight on. And Tory sources claim that the Government could continue into 1997 so long as it avoided giving the Ulster Unionists specific reasons for voting it down.

With the Tories' Commons majority now vulnerable to just two deaths or defections - after expected Tory defeats in two by-elections due by March - MPs' telephones hummed with speculation yesterday as to the identity of the "six or seven" who might follow Alan Howarth and Ms Nicholson across the floor of the House.



Michael Portillo: Interview not set up by Tory Central Office

Ireland peace process. "It would be most unfortunate if any plausibility were given to the suspicion [that] the peace in Northern Ireland would be allowed to suffer because of internal political difficulties at Westminster," he said.

If Mr Major could deliver a lasting peace, it "would ensure his place in history", Dr Daly said. But he entered political controversy by urging all-party talks without waiting for the IRA to agree to start handing in its weapons. "There is now an urgent need to move into inclusive political talks. I believe that prolonged failure to do so

is fraught with grave risks. It is more than high time now to see negotiations under way as soon as possible so that paramilitary weapons may be decommissioned as a concomitant and as a consequence of political progress," he said.

David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Party leader, has maintained a discreet silence since Ms Nicholson's defection, but his security spokesman, Ken Maginnis, said the party would not bring the Government down "prematurely" - except on Northern Irish issues.

PM faces crisis, page 2
Leading article, page 10

Father is killed as he tries to stop muggers

IAN MacKINNON

A father of three who tried to intervene in a street robbery was shot dead yesterday in a burst of gunfire hours after seeing in the New Year.

Two brothers, who were friends of the dead man, were also injured, one shot in the side and the other pistol-whipped to the ground during the ferocious assault in St Paul's, Bristol, a district notorious for drug-dealing.

A major police operation involving 30 detectives took place across the city during the day to try to track down the gang of four men who sped away in a car after the attack at 7am.

Last night one of the brothers was still under guard at a hospital which police refused to disclose because of fears that his life might be in danger.

Another man who had been the victim of the original mugging was not seriously hurt and was being questioned by detectives.

The dead man, Evon Berry, 37, a caretaker at the Malcolm X community centre in St Paul's, was hit by a single bullet in the head. But the Jamaican-born man, who has three teenage daughters and comes from Montpellier, managed to crawl fifty yards in an effort to reach a taxi office before collapsing in the street

where police found his body.

Police said the tragedy appeared to have happened after the three men, who were returning home after clearing up at the community centre's New Year party, attempted to halt a robbery in Sussex Place.

They saw a man, surrounded by four black men, being pistol-whipped. Mr Berry and the others asked what was going on and were told to "mind their own business".

But as he and the others continued to protest they were threatened and shots were fired. As they moved backwards, their hands in the air, a man ran forward and more shots rang out.

One of the brothers, aged 39, was repeatedly clubbed in the face with a pistol butt and eventually knocked to the ground. He was released from hospital after treatment.

As his brother, 36, tried to come to his aid he was shot in

the side. His condition was said to be "serious but stable".

Officers said the four men they were hunting were "armed and dangerous" and warned the public to keep away from them.

Chief Inspector Piet Biesheuvel said officers had interviewed the robbery victim, from Southampton, for clues. "We are still questioning the first man, who was apparently being robbed, as he is our chief witness," he said.

"At this stage, there is no motive for the shootings. These men may just have been in the wrong place at the wrong time."

The caretaker leaves three daughters, aged 17, 15 and 11, who are all still at school. His grieving widow, Linda, said: "He was a lovely man who was just a big, gentle person who would not hurt anybody. We will all miss him, he was such a good father and a husband."

Self-defence law, page 3

How to become a freelance writer

by NICK DAWES

Freelance writing can be creative, fulfilling and a lot of fun, with excellent money to be made as well. What's more, anyone can become a writer. No special qualifications or experience are required.

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Ailing Saudi king hands over to prince

MICHAEL SHERIDAN
Diplomatic Editor
MAYNARD BIRD

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia handed over the reins of power yesterday to his half-brother, Crown Prince Abdullah, in a dynastic reshuffle prompted by his ill-health. The move could signify a subtle change in Saudi Arabia's relations with the West and may cause tension within the royal family.

The King, 73, had a stroke in

November. He remains monarch and "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" at Mecca and Medina, but day-to-day government will be run by the Crown Prince, 71.

King Fahd said: "Because we wish to spend some time resting and recuperating... we entrust you in this decree to take over management of government affairs while we enjoy rest and recuperation." Prince Abdullah accepted: "I shall return to you whenever I find my-

self in need of guidance from your directives and recommendations."

King Fahd left hospital on 7 December. A statement referred to a "health emergency" brought on by exhaustion and said "all check-ups... are reassuring and, thank God, he is enjoying health and fitness". However, American doctors were flown in to treat the King, leading to speculation that his condition was more serious.

Should King Fahd quit the

political scene, Saudi Arabia could face considerable uncertainty. It continues to suffer the economic consequences of low crude-oil prices; fundamentalist opposition to the royal family has emerged and a car-bomb in Riyadh recently killed five Americans.

Prince Abdullah, who was appointed first deputy prime minister and Crown Prince when King Fahd succeeded his brother Khalid in 1982, is considered a traditionalist. He, too, is el-

derly and unwell, but still a powerful figure. Since King Fahd's illness he has been running the country and is commander of the National Guard, which oversees internal security. The Riyadh car-bomb was aimed at a National Guard building where American trainers instructed Saudi personnel.

Few details of political debate emerge from the reticent Saudi court, but the Crown Prince is believed to be more conservative than King Fahd on

religion and less inclined to take an automatic pro-Western stance on matters of policy.

News of King Fahd's "rest" came as the 1996 budget, retaining last year's spending freeze, was released. The 150bn-riyal (£26bn) budget forecasts an 18.5bn-riyal deficit, slightly higher than last year's. Expenditure is unchanged, as was oil revenue, calculated at \$14 a barrel.

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IN BRIEF

Turkish heroin threat
About 20 Turkish families or gangs are feared to be at the centre of a growing heroin network in Britain. Page 4

Ospreys heading south
Forty years after the osprey returned to Scotland, the bird of prey is set to spread to England, where it has been extinct for more than a century. Page 4



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Call for child spies to enforce smoking law

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

Children should be sent to buy cigarettes to check whether shopkeepers are selling them to the under-16s, doctors said yesterday.

The Royal College of Physicians urged health and local authorities to use volunteer children because doctors believe the resulting prosecutions - with fines of up to £2,500 - will deter other retailers.

A similar project in the US reduced under-age smoking by

50 per cent, according to Dr Alan Mayon Davis, spokesman for the college's Faculty of Public Health Medicine.

Such a programme is now easier to operate following changes in the law and is approved by government departments. It has already been used in Liverpool and Buckinghamshire, and a total of 32 local authorities have each brought at least one prosecution after using volunteer children to buy cigarettes.

The college's call comes as smoking among secondary school children is rising, despite

a target in the Government's "Health of the Nation" programme to reduce it. In 1994, 12 per cent of children smoked, against 10 per cent in 1993 when the Government's aim is a reduction to 6 per cent.

Children can be used ethically to make test purchases of cigarettes by using a consent form, signed by parents or guardians, and having adult witnesses to the purchase. By providing the child's birth certificate and photographs of the child as dressed on the day against a height chart, it is possible to provide ad-

equated evidence for prosecution without the child needing to attend court, the college says.

Volunteer children have to be used in a way which avoids entrapment or deliberately misleading retailers. But while the courts in England twice refused to convict on the basis of evidence from volunteer children in 1993-94, none did so in 1993-94. Government guidance in England, Wales and Northern Ireland specifically mentions using children to make test purchases, although the Scottish guidance explicitly rules it out.



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Thaw ensures a warm welcome for 1996



Festive fun: An acrobatic display team and (right) a 70ft helium-filled Woody Woodpecker joined London's annual parade yesterday, but the event failed to claim a world record for the largest marching band. Photographs: Philip Meech

New year celebrations: Improved weather gives boost to main events but revelry is marred by violence and road accidents

LOUISE JURY

Thousands of revellers drank and danced their way into the New Year yesterday, warmed by the thaw which finally banished the worst of the Arctic cold.

Although thick fog continued to make the New Year's Day crawl homewards treacherous, the snow which has covered much of the country for days began to clear and Britain returned to near-normal temperatures.

Thousands of people turned

out for the 10th annual New Year's Day parade in London where 6,000 musicians from 10 countries made an unsuccessful bid for the world record of largest marching and playing band. "It was still probably the best parade ever," a spokeswoman said.

But madcap antics were not confined to the capital as 130 people took part in the annual 200-yard dash for charity through the mud of the Blackwater estuary at Maldon, Essex.

Swimmers endured a chilly start to the year at South

Queensferry, Firth of Forth, and at Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear, where the dip dates back to 1910.

For the traditional stroke-of-midnight celebrations, an estimated 70,000 people crammed into Trafalgar Square, London, about 10,000 fewer than last year, while another 20,000 thronged surrounding streets.

Hundreds of police weeded out drunks and confiscated flares and spray cans although one firework was smuggled through and left off to mark the start of the New Year.

There were 64 arrests and 24 people needed hospital treatment. St John's Ambulance staff dealt with a further 126 people who suffered minor injuries in the square, where Nelson's Column, the fountains and the fountains were sealed off.

In Scotland, 300,000 gathered in central Edinburgh for what was billed as Europe's largest event of the night, forming the climax of five days of celebrations to mark the arrival of 1996. A Lothian and Borders police spokesman described it as "good-natured". Twenty people

were arrested, all for drink-related offences.

And in Glasgow, 15,000 people packed George's Square. A Strathclyde police spokesman said: "It seems to have been quite quiet. A lot of people didn't come out because of the cold, but we are not aware of any trouble."

However, in Merseyside, an ambulance crew responding to an emergency call in Newton-le-Willows, near St Helens, was attacked by party-goers. A male paramedic was punched in the face and a female crew member

pushed to the ground as the vehicle's windows were smashed.

The crew were not seriously hurt but David Kenyon, operations director of Mersey Regional Ambulance, said the incident was "an absolute disgrace".

In Hampshire, more than 100 people were involved in a brawl outside a football club in Farnborough when police tried to arrest two brothers for an assault. Five officers were slightly injured.

A 36-year-old man in Devon was breath-tested positive after

a woman died in a car crash two hours into the New Year. The victim was dead on arrival at hospital following the accident at Talaton near Honiton in which a Ford Escort collided with a wall.

In Barry, South Glamorgan, a 30-year-old local man, Lee Thompson, was killed and a man and a woman injured after a car ploughed into revellers outside the town's Royal Hotel.

A London Weather Centre spokesman said the weather might not improve significantly for a few days but temperatures were returning to a more

normal 6C or 7C. In the South-west, they climbed as high as 12C yesterday, although Scotland was still experiencing temperatures just above freezing.

An AA motoring organisation spokesman said fog in many parts of the country was causing problems.

Weathermen said the cold weather was likely to prevent 1995 becoming the warmest year since records began 336 years ago. Final figures would not be available until later in the week.

Death of intruder rekindles debate over self-defence law

STEPHEN WARD
Legal Affairs Correspondent

Police forces are expected to be advised by the Crown Prosecution Service early this year not to rush into pressing charges against "have-a-go-heroes" who hit out in self-defence.

The issue was highlighted again over the weekend by the latest in a series of incidents in which injuries have been caused while people were defending their property.

On Saturday, Niklos Baumgartner, 53, grappled with a 22-year-old man he found in his home near Derby. The struggle moved to the front garden where, according to police, Mr Baumgartner tried vainly to attract help from passing motorists.

As the intruder lay on the ground, Mr Baumgartner ran to a neighbour and raised the alarm. He was treated for a broken wrist, heavy bruising and shock, but the suspected burglar, named as Robert Ingham, died in hospital.

Police yesterday interviewed Mr Baumgartner in the presence of his lawyer, but stressed that



Niklos Baumgartner: Awaits police decision on charges

he was not under arrest and said it would be several days before they could decide whether he would face charges.

The law allows the use of "reasonable force" to defend person or property, or to prevent a crime. There have been widely differing views among judges, politicians and ordinary people about the definition of "reasonable", and who is the victim. Over the years, case law has de-

fined that it may be reasonable to make a pre-emptive strike in self-defence.

The new guidelines to police are being drawn up after a review by the CPS requested late last year by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard.

Mr Howard had already given a clear steer to the CPS and the police in November when he told the Police Superintendents' Association that "the impression is sometimes given that the victim is treated more harshly than the villain". He said he was particularly worried by cases where the police charged people after they had defended themselves, only for the charges to be dropped later.

The new guidelines are part of an attempt to reduce as far as possible regional variations in charging practice for assaults. Some forces prosecute more than others and some press for actual bodily harm rather than common assault.

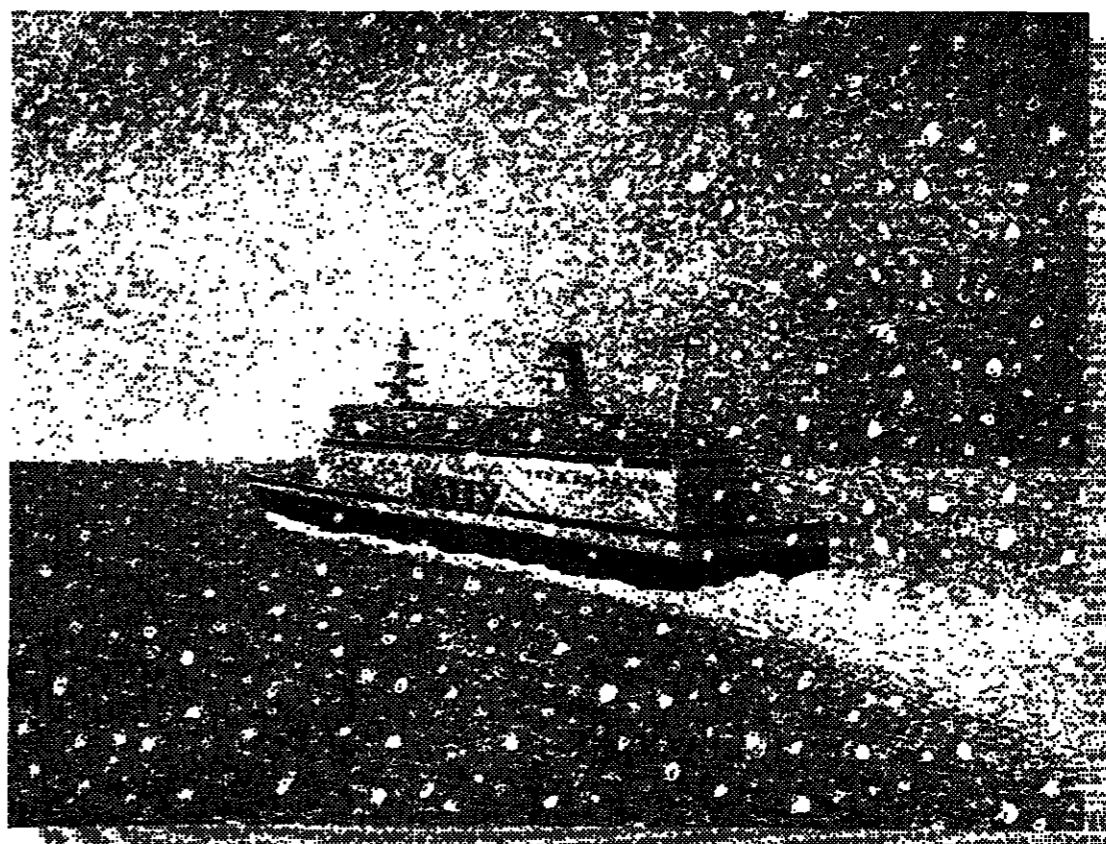
The case which brought the "reasonable force" debate to national headlines arose after Ted Newbury, an 82-year-old from Ilkerton, Derbyshire, fired a 12-bore shotgun towards a young

man who was trying to break into the shed on his allotment. A jury acquitted him of wounding, but the intruder then sued the pensioner for damages, and was awarded £4,000 - a decision upheld by the Court of Appeal, which said the force had exceeded reasonable limits.

In November last year, a jury at Teesside Crown Court took four minutes to clear a man who had seen a thief escape into some trees and fired a shotgun towards them. Some of the pellets hit the thief, Judge Peter Fox suggested the CPS had been wrong to prosecute.

In another case, in Cambridgeshire, Roderic Minshall, had fitted a home-made anti-theft device to his car. He was acquitted of assault after it gave an 8,000-volt shock to a security guard who touched it.

The Home Secretary previously promised to review the law two and a half years ago, after the trial of Joseph Elliott, 19, who had slashed the tyres of a car while high on drugs. A relative of the car's owner tackled him, and Elliott stabbed him to death. He was cleared of murder after pleading self-defence.



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THE ART OF SMOOTH SAILING

Cameras 'fail to reduce crime'

DANNY PENMAN

The Government could be wasting its money by investing in surveillance cameras, according to a study due to be published soon.

Researchers at South Bank University have monitored the

effect of introducing the cameras in Sutton, south London. Crime fell by 13 per cent in the area where the cameras were installed. However, it decreased by 30 per cent in the borough as a whole.

Other, generally simpler initiatives, such as locking multi-storey car parks overnight and providing security staff with pagers so they can keep in contact with the control room are credited with reducing the crime rate across the borough.

Surveillance cameras had a disproportionate effect on certain crimes. Burglaries, vandalism and vehicle crime decreased, while robberies, thefts and the possession of drugs increased.

Criminals also switched to stealing from people when they were inside shops. Most assaults still took place in the high

street. Burger outlets, pubs and the railway station were the favourite areas for assaults.

The report says: "CCTV has recently been the subject of several television documentaries and... banner headlines claiming large reductions in recorded crime. In the main, these claims are not based on any substantial research."

The Government is planning to install up to 10,000 more surveillance cameras in Britain's high streets, estates and city centres at a cost of £15m.

A spokesman for the Association of Chief Police Officers said that research of this type was unlikely to prove the benefits of the cameras.

"It's impossible to prove one way or another whether the cameras work. It's like trying to prove that BSE cannot be transmitted to humans. They are one

part of a multi-disciplinary approach [to crime fighting]."

Many of the benefits of the cameras are hidden, according to Acpo, but it was "common sense" to "know that it engenders a feeling of reassurance in the public". The spokesman said: "It's also patently obvious that if someone is going to put a brick through a window, they won't do it in the view of a camera," he added.

Conor Foley, spokesman for civil liberties group Liberty, warned the cameras could end up having little overall effect on crime because police resources might be reduced overall or redirected to other areas.

"It could give local authorities the excuse to stop the police from patrolling in troublesome areas. They could be used as a cost-cutting measure," Mr Foley said.

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news

Turkish gangs muscling in on heroin trade

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

Up to 20 Turkish gangs are running multi-million pound heroin rackets, stretching from London to Glasgow, making them one of Britain's fastest emerging organised crime groups.

The growing power of the Turkish traffickers is causing increasing concern among police and customs officers. Unpub-

lished figures show that customs officers seized more than a ton (1,000kg) of heroin - worth £90m at street prices - this year from Turkish traffickers, which is twice the quantity discovered in 1994. In one raid on a warehouse in north-east London earlier this year 190kg of heroin was discovered, but 12 similar shipments are believed to have gone undetected.

There have also been a number of murders involving com-

peting Turkish groups, the majority of which are family outfits based in London, with strongholds in Glasgow and Manchester. They are also involved in smuggling illegal immigrants, extorting money through protection rackets and counterfeiting. People pay about £3,000 each to be smuggled in through British ports. It can cost up to £10,000 for a "special" job, with a bogus passport. Much of the drug money is

being laundered and made "legal" by buying up property and investing it in businesses such as restaurants and clubs. The senior members of the criminal families avoid involvement in the direct sale of the drug, usually passing it on to dealers to sell at street level, making it extremely difficult for the police to charge them.

Police forces throughout Europe are becoming increasingly concerned about the heroin

smuggling from Turkey that a special meeting of Interpol discussed the subject about two months ago at a conference.

Detective Chief Inspector Ken Gallagher, deputy head of the south-east office of the National Criminal Intelligence Service, said: "In London we get about 5kg on a weekly basis - it's Turkish heroin linked to Turkish criminals. They are becoming more organised and their influence has extended.

The price of heroin has been falling significantly recently. The price is only falling because the availability is increasing."

He added: "There have been a number of drug-related murders in Glasgow and London, which is a popular route for heroin."

He believes there are at least a dozen major Turkish families operating in this country - 10 in London and two in Glasgow. Police have reported that the

Turkish criminals are increasingly turning to firearms and violence. In two incidents last year a man was shot dead in a café by a suspected hitman and another was murdered and then dumped in a field in Kent. Both were Turks who had connections with heroin trafficking.

Phil Connelly, head of the heroin operations at Customs and Excise investigations branch, said: "Heroin is the most pernicious and serious

drug and therefore it is seen as the most serious threat. The traffickers can make huge amounts of money, which is why it is so attractive."

He estimates that there are about 20 major Turkish outfits operating among Britain's 300,000 Turks and Turkish Cypriots. But he believes better intelligence has helped double the amount of drugs seized this year, which will have cost the traffickers about £6m.

Political groups used as traffickers' cover

The 36 rolls of cotton looked as if they could have come from any market stall. Piled in a heap at a depot in north-east London they were being picked up by their new owner.

Unfortunately for him, the two labourers helping with the load were undercover officers from the investigations division at Customs and Excise.

Inside the 36 rolls, which were with a load of about 250, secret compartments had been cut and filled with heroin. In all 190kg of the drug - worth about £17m at street prices - was found. It was smuggled through Dover in a truck by Turkish drug traffickers from Istanbul.

Earlier this month Bulent Cevik, from Turkey, was jailed for 20 years for importing the drug. At his trial it emerged that 12 other similar shipments had been made, in which the cotton had been picked up, but there was no evidence that it had been sold. Customs officers assume vast quantities of the drug had been distributed around the country.

Police and customs investigators believe the traffickers are growing in power and that more heroin is entering the country. Customs doubled their seizures of Turkish heroin this year and police have reported a drop in the street price - proof that there is more of the substance available.

Police believe that many of the criminals are using the cover of two left-wing groups, the PKK (the Kurdistan Workers' Party) and Dev Sol (the Revo-

lutionary Left) which carry out extortion in London to raise funds for guerrilla warfare in Turkey. Their activities are monitored by Special Branch.

The police have also noted an apparent increased willingness by the Turks to use guns and violence to maintain their grip on the market.

In September last year, the body of Hassan Bilgi, 46, a Turkish Cypriot, was found with gunshot wounds dumped in a field in Kent. He is believed to have been killed in London where he lived on the Ferrier Estate in Kidbrooke, south-east London. Police believe he had links with Turkish heroin dealers.

Mehmet Kaygisiz, a 33-year-old Kurdish businessman, was also known to the police as a middle-ranking member of a drugs gang. He was playing backgammon at a Turkish club in Islington, north London, in April last year when a man walked in and shot him dead. Security sources believe he was killed by a hitman who had been specially flown in from Turkey.

The heroin is usually imported into the UK in large quantities and then sent to contacts, often outside the Turkish community, in smaller packages of about 50kg. These secondary traffickers are based in places

such as Liverpool and Glasgow. They have their contacts who take about 7kg loads, which are broken up into tiny amounts for street and club sales.

The Turkish gangs have concentrated on heroin and thereby managed to avoid competing with the traditional family gangs who do not have the international contacts and find it difficult to import the drug. However they are happy to buy the heroin from the Turks.

Many of the families have invested in night-clubs, drinking dens, known as "spiders", and restaurants in areas such as Green Lanes in north London, which is filled with cafés and clubs in which Turks drink coffee, gamble and gossip.

Detective Chief Inspector Ken Gallagher, deputy head of the south-east office of the National Criminal Intelligence Service, said there was no evidence that either Dev Sol or the PKK were involved in heroin trafficking. "Criminals will pretend to use political titles such as terrorism to help gain more respect or a cover, but in reality they are just criminals."

"The modern high-level drug dealer will have some legitimate business activity. He has to launder the proceeds. This is becoming increasingly sophisticated. Family businesses and connections are used. The people at the top keep clean."

He added that the breaking down of borders across Europe made trafficking harder to detect. "We are looking at this as an international problem."

Rare bird: Water company aims to rear chicks at Rutland after Scottish success



High hopes: An osprey landing on a nest in Scotland. South of the border they were hunted to extinction

Photograph: Tom Pilon

Ospreys set to nest again in England

JOHN ARLIDGE
Scotland Correspondent

Forty years after the osprey returned to colonise Scotland, the fish-eating bird of prey has bred so successfully that it is set to extend its range over the border to England, where it has been extinct for more than a century.

From the single pair that nested at Loch Garten, near Aviemore, in 1954, the Scottish population of this spectacular hawk has increased steadily to reach 100 pairs, which last year produced 150 young.

The Scottish total is now large enough for conservationists to begin to reintroduce the bird to England.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is examining plans put forward by Anglian Water to take several chicks and young birds from the Highlands and rear them in specially constructed eyries at Rutland Water in Leicestershire. The birds often stop at the reservoir on their long summer migration north from Senegal and Gambia to Scotland for the breeding season. So far none has settled permanently.

The last recorded pair of ospreys in England nested in Somerset in 1842. By 1850 marksmen and egg collectors had hunted the bird out of existence. Anglian Water is confident the Leicestershire project will reverse the trend, enabling

people south of the border to witness the bird swooping down on to lakes and rivers to grab trout and salmon.

John McAngus, a spokesman for the Huntingdon-based company, said: "For the past 20 years ospreys have been coming to our reservoir at Rutland Water, staying a while, eating a few of our trout and then heading north to Scotland. They are magnificent, unforgettable birds and we would like more of them here more of the time, and, hopefully, further afield."

RSPB officials welcome the plan but they say more research is needed before it can be approved. "Anything which encourages more ospreys to nest is a good thing and it may

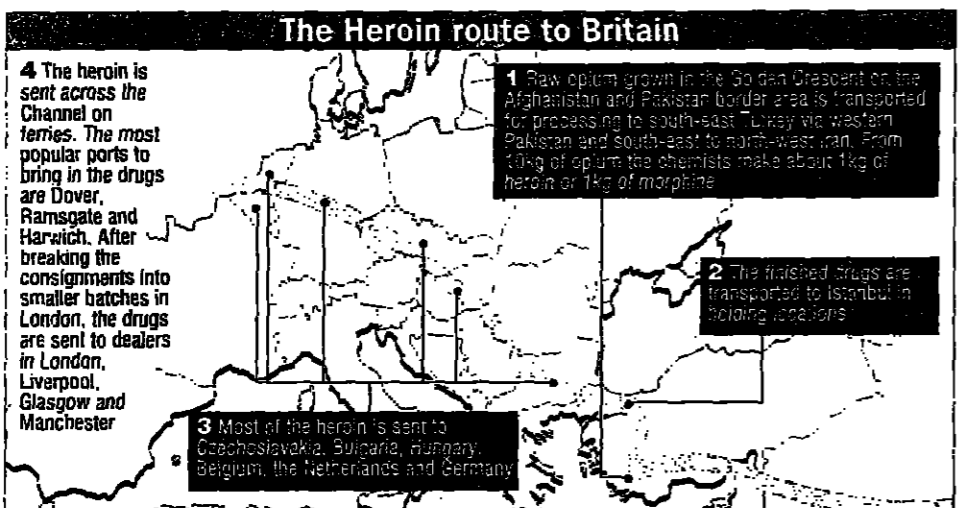
be time to give the species a helping hand south of the border," Chris Harbard, an RSPB spokesman, said. "But we need to be confident that the birds are likely to survive long-term in the Rutland area, that the scheme will not affect the Scottish population and that the ospreys will not pose a threat to other local land users, especially farmers."

If the five-year Rutland experiment proves successful, ornithologists predict ospreys will begin nesting across the Midlands and the North early next century. Richard Thaxton, who has run the RSPB's osprey centre at Loch Garten for 10 years, said: "There are plenty of good nesting sites in the Kielder Forest in Northumberland and in

Cumbria, which lie alongside suitable fishing habitats. It is now simply a matter of waiting."

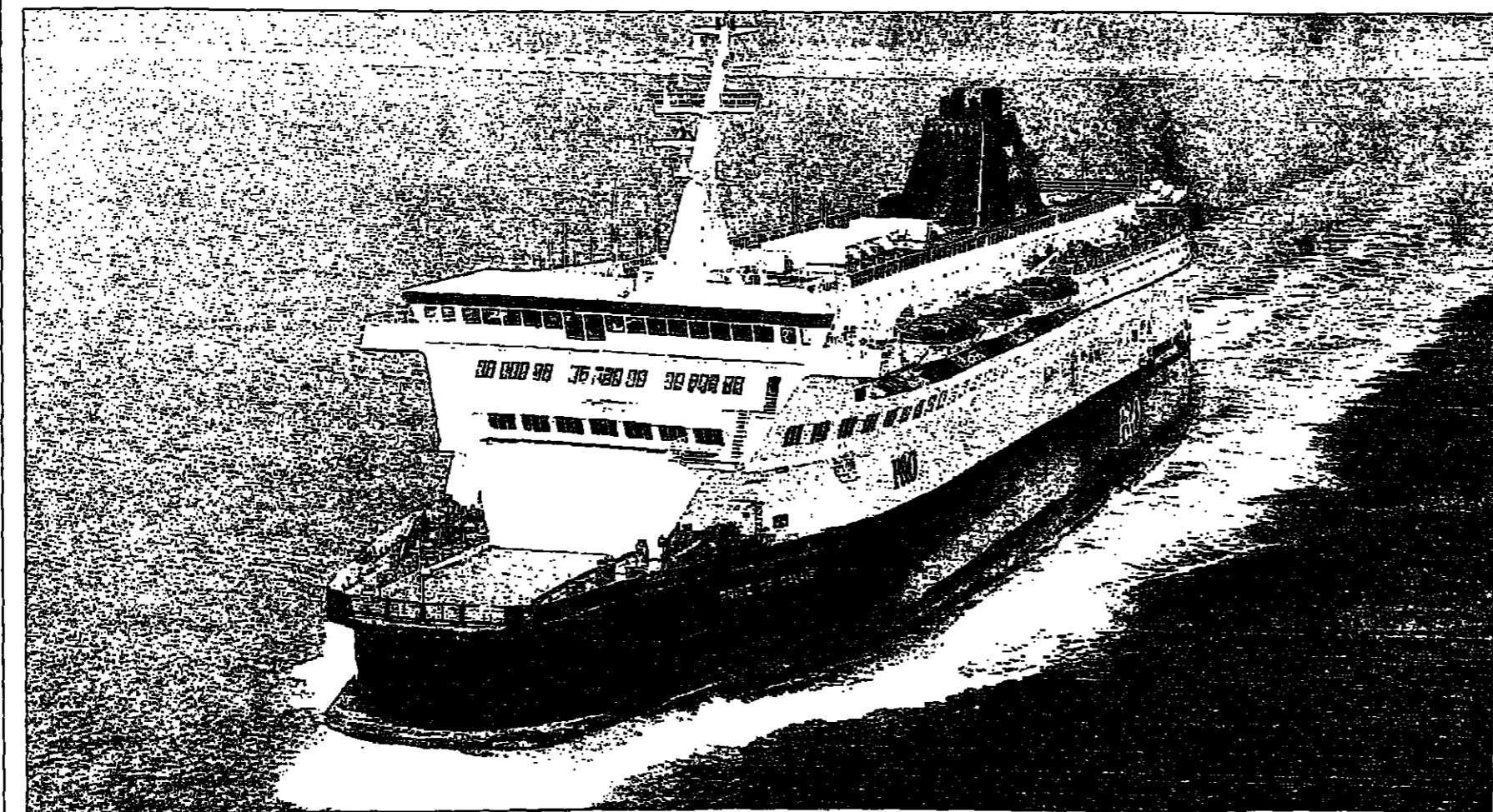
As RSPB officials prepare for the English experiment, they stress that efforts to protect Scottish ospreys will continue. Earlier this year officials introduced 24-hour surveillance and put up razor wire at nesting sites, following attacks on eyries in which nine chicks were killed - the highest number for years.

"Although the population is stable and expanding towards England, it does not mean that all risks to the osprey have disappeared," Mr Harbard said. "We are determined to take on the egg collectors and vandals to safeguard the long-term future of the species."



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To qualify for these bargain prices you must collect four differently numbered tokens from the six we are publishing this week. Today we are publishing token two and we will give full details how to take advantage of this offer later this week.

INDEPENDENT

Token 2

P&O
European Ferries

NHS 'wastes £1bn on ineffective treatments'

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

At least £1bn of National Health Service resources could be released for improved patient care by cutting out unnecessary and ineffective treatments, according to Sir Michael Peckham, the director of research and development on the NHS executive.

In an interview marking his departure from the post, Sir Michael said the steady application of science-based medicine should leave the NHS affordable into the future, squaring the circle of an ageing population and continued medical advance.

Sir Michael—who is to head a new science and health forum at University College, London, and act as a consultant to the Canadian and other governments on introducing the "evidence-based" approach to treatment which the NHS has been developing since 1991—said he rejected the "gloomy" view advanced by Sir Duncan Nichol, the former NHS chief executive, and others that the NHS is likely to become unaffordable in its present form. "Of course all the pressures are there," he said. "But if in 1948, when the NHS was founded, you had been presented with what the service is now, or even presented with what Heathrow looks like now, you would have said 'this is unsustainable'."

In 1948, he said, transplantation did not exist, there was no treatment for heart failure other than salt-restriction and diuretics, and much modern technology such as keyhole surgery did not exist. "But the fact is, all this has been absorbed. It is true that we will have new drugs for Alzheimer's disease and for chronic neurological illness and for disability and new surgical techniques, but I see no reason why, with a good connection being made between the health service and

science, and with the scientific method brought to bear on health service problems, that should not be perfectly well managed within the NHS as we know it."

Assessing what worked, and what did not, had led to reductions in some procedures, such as D & Cs—scrapping of the lining of the womb—in women under 40, and a wide range of studies had been commissioned from comparing different medical and surgical treatments for coronary artery disease to assessing which artificial hip joint worked best.

A system for disseminating the results was now in place that could inform doctors of best practice and affect the contracts that health authorities placed, he added. "What we are engaged in is a science-based rationalisation of health care, as an alternative to arbitrary rationing. We are saying that the power of this approach is such that we can absorb the new things—recognising that many innovations have ultimately been cost-reducing, for example the replacement of surgery for ulcers, first by drugs ... and now by a simpler and cheaper use of antibiotics."

"We have a healthier population now, there are many more things we can do and are doing, and these seem to me pointers to a manageable NHS, but it is essential that it is science based."

However, Sir Michael added that as yet "we do not know what the real payback of moving to an evidence-based NHS will be". The research and development directorate is developing an economic model to provide better estimates of that, he said. But "we have a whole range of anecdotes and individual examples and if we begin to aggregate these it is not difficult to get to £1bn that could be released for improved patient care, while improving the quality of existing care. I suspect it could be more."

Child prodigy: Luke McShane becomes the youngest British player to defeat a grandmaster



Masterful performance: Luke McShane studying the board at the Hastings Chess Congress, where he beat Scotland's Colin McNab

Photograph: Andrew Hasson

Winning moves of a 12-year-old chess king

WILLIAM HARTSTON
Chess Correspondent

Away from the chessboard, Luke McShane seems much like any other bright 12-year-old. He darts quickly from one thing to another, he fidgets, he grins a good deal and he appears rather insecure and suspicious in the company of grown-ups whom he does not know very well.

Once the chessmen are in his hands, however, he is transformed into a model of concentration and confidence. Last weekend, Luke became the

youngest British player ever to defeat a grandmaster when he beat Scotland's Colin McNab in the Challengers Tournament at the Hastings Chess Congress.

Nobody was surprised. He has, after all, been beating adults in tournaments since he was 7, and, by winning the world under-10 championship in 1992, became the youngest holder of the title of Fide Master, the first rung on the long ladder to grandmaster.

Luke was taught chess by his grandfather at the age of five and won his first junior tournament six months later. Living

in west London, he was fortunate to fall into the clutches of the Richmond Chess Initiative, a highly competitive training scheme for young players that has produced a string of junior champions. Under the tuition of grandmaster Daniel King, Luke has made astounding progress, notching up a series of impressive wins over International Masters and now gaining his first grandmaster scalp.

But does he have what it takes to get to the very top? The experience of other chess prodigies is certainly encouraging. There have been only half-a-

dozen players in history who attained a similar level of play at such an early age. Paul Morphy, Jose Raul Capablanca, Bobby Fischer and Garry Kasparov went on to become the world's strongest players. Our own Nigel Short rose to become the official world title challenger.

The next few years will determine whether Luke can follow in the steps of these champions. There are, however, different schools of thought about how best to turn a child prodigy into a world-beater. The old Soviet system knew how to deliver the goods. When a tal-

ented 10-year-old was spotted, he would be taken into the Borovnik Chess School. Then almost nothing would be heard of him until he emerged to win a major international tournament.

The English technique, practised on Short and more recently Michael Adams, has been to throw them in at the deep end and hope. Short's battering in his first strong international tournament probably put back his chess development by a couple of years while he rebuilt his confidence. Luke had a similar traumatic baptism last year, when he finished last in the

Richmond International, but he seems to have recovered well. Finally, there is the Hungarian system as practised by Laszlo and Clara Polgar on their three daughters: teach them the moves at 2 1/2 and specialise in chess from the age of six. Judit Polgar is now ranked tenth in the world at the age of 19.

At Westminster School, which Luke now attends, specialising in chess is not an option. All the same, perhaps now would be a good time to put your money on a McShane-Polgar match for the World Championship in 2010.

Feeding time: France loses culinary face while Britons head for the chill cabinet

Ronay grounds 'Meal in a box' French fare draws £1m a day

LOUISE JURY

In a reversal of culinary reputations, the British have beaten the French. Investigations by the food guru Egon Ronay produced a resounding Gallic trouncing.

Not in the field of haute cuisine, exactly: the experience in question was of the variety sandwiched in before a flight to Malaga. But in Mr Ronay's survey of airport cuisine, Heathrow was declared winner over its main West European rivals: Schiphol airport in Amsterdam, Charles de Gaulle in Paris, and Frankfurt.

At the request of BAA, the former privatised British Airports Authority, Mr Ronay took six days to sample some 200 items of food and drink from five outlets at each airport. Schiphol got 1 out of 10 for food quality, with fare including a hotdog sausage that tasted "like a piece of leather". Mr Ronay said: "It is for the food masochist. Anybody who eats at Amsterdam airport needs to have his head and palate examined. It is below criticism."

Charles de Gaulle got 2 out

of 10. "The airport's catering runs completely contrary to the French reputation for food," he said. "Food at Charles de Gaulle is for people who have damaged their palates in some way. I would advise people strongly to eat before they get to the airport."

Frankfurt achieved 4 out of 10, but lost out on service. "The food is much better than at Amsterdam and Paris. But all the catering, including the food, exudes inefficiency."

By comparison, Heathrow was awarded 6.5 to 7 out of 10. "The most outstanding thing about Heathrow was the friendliness of the staff. The places are extremely well organised and the general standard, although it needs constant monitoring, is increasing all the time," Mr Ronay said. For the best chips, the Heathrow Burger King was top-ranking, with 9.5 out of 10, while the worst, at Charles de Gaulle's French Riviera restaurant, were definitely *not* points. A Heathrow spokesman said: "It is recognition of our efforts to provide passengers with a wide range of restaurants and snack-food facilities."

Britons are spending £1m a day on pre-cooked dinners and meals-for-one because they are too busy or too lonely to cook, according to industry analysts, writes Louise Jury.

Rocketing divorce figures, more working women, and increasingly hectic lifestyles have prompted a boom in the ready-meals business.

Datamonitor, which analyses the sector, said it expected figures to show a 10-per-cent increase in the last year over £323m sales of chilled meals in 1994.

The increase is a clear indicator of social change. A spokeswoman for Datamonitor said: "People who live on their own do not want to spend hours cooking a full meal for just one person. There is more variety too on the ready-meal shelves. Italian dishes were always popular but, now, so are Indian, Chinese and Mexican."

The British, she added, are becoming more adventurous

in their tastes and would buy foods tried on foreign holidays if they did not have time to cook.

International cuisine accounts for 4 in 10 ready-made meals while traditional fare, such as steak and kidney pie, has dropped from a quarter of the market five years ago to 17 per cent. One in eight meals is vegetarian.

Marks & Spencer dominates sales, providing more than half of the pre-cooked dinners and meals-for-one bought in Britain, even though only two per cent of the population does its weekly regular grocery shopping at the store. Sainsbury sells 17 per cent of the total, and Tesco 12 per cent.

"People are switching to ready meals as they are more convenient," the analysts' spokeswoman said. "Working women have less time to prepare a meal and ... chilled ready meals are proving to be the perfect caterer for a dining-in occasion."

DAILY POEM

White Peaches

By Alan Ross

*There was the Rhone, neat barges
With gardens imitating real life.*

*A colt so brushed its coat
Flowed like water.*

*At a fruitstall we fingered
White peaches, their unbruised flesh*

*Headier than man-made scents.
Today, months later, I picked one up*

*Again, hesitantly, and it was as if
All this time the scent of you*

*Had been stored in the soft skin,
Its aroma bottled and dated.*

An unlooked-for delight in the autumn was the publication of Alan Ross's *After Pusan* (Harvill, £9.99). Since 1961 Ross has been editor of the *London Magazine* but has also published poetry collections, travel books, seven cricketing companions and two volumes of autobiography. *After Pusan* is the result of a creative re-start when Ross took a trip to Seoul in South Korea after a breakdown in the mid-Eighties. This is an old-fashioned poetry collection: polished in tone and subject matter, delicate in its sensibilities, content with the miniature portrait rather than the grand canvas, and unexpectedly touching.

informative:

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0.38

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5.50

5.50

4.13

4.13

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8.00

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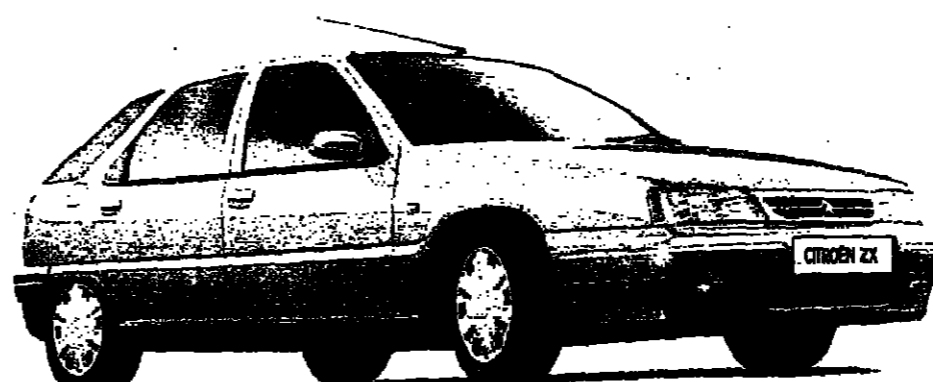
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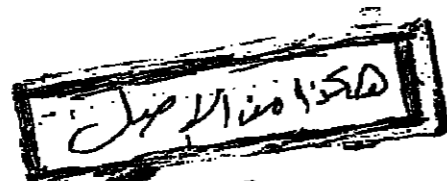
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Prince Abdullah: Pan-Arab leanings worry the West

Traditionalist's tribal links may keep West at bay

ASHRAF FOUAD
Reuters

Dubai — Crown Prince Abdullah, who was handed the running of government by his half-brother King Fahd yesterday, is widely seen as a tough traditionalist who could prove to be less open to the West.

The King issued a decree handing affairs of state to the crown prince so he can rest after suffering a stroke in November.

The 71-year-old prince "is not outgoing with foreigners like

King Fahd", a diplomat said. Many Arab analysts say the difference between the two is in style rather than policy. "The outlook will be very similar or else he would not have become crown prince," one said.

Arab analysts say if a consensus within the family had not been reached in 1982, when he replaced King Fahd as crown prince, Abdullah could have been dropped from the running for the kingdom's highest post.

Diplomats refer to Prince Abdullah's pan-Arab leanings, especially his close ties to Syr-

ia. Saudi Arabia places much emphasis on its relationship with the United States and the West. Ties with Washington date from 1932 when the father of Fahd and Abdullah, King Abdul-Aziz (popularly known as Ibn Saud), founder of Saudi Arabia, granted an oil exploration concession to a US firm.

Prince Abdullah has the handicap of having only half-brothers in the Saudi royal family. Full brothers and their sons tend to side together at family meetings when a consensus is sought on crucial is-

ssues. But as head of the well-armed 57,000-strong National Guard he enjoys tribal backing in the desert kingdom.

Prince Abdullah is one of the more than 30 surviving sons of Abdul-Aziz who had 44 sons by 22 wives and died in 1953.

Since then the throne has moved from brother to brother among Ibn Saud's sons, although some were excluded; Ibn Saud was succeeded by

himself. Prince Abdullah has been in charge of the National Guard since 1962 and has rejected pressure to merge it with the regular armed forces headed by his half-brother, Prince Sultan, diplomats say.

An official profile says the crown prince acquired many virtues from his father: "Probity, correct conduct, munificence, charity, love for his fellow countrymen, humility and religious devotion."

The latter is of great importance in the conservative and predominantly Sunni Muslim kingdom, home to the two holy shrines in Mecca and Medina.

Prince Sultan, 68, is one of six full brothers to King Fahd and is the top candidate to become crown prince once Abdullah assumes the throne. He has been Minister of Defence and Aviation since 1962. King Fahd is Prime Minister, with Crown Prince Abdullah first deputy and Prince Sultan second deputy prime minister.

The mainly US-trained Na-

tional Guard, in which tribal forces have a large presence, is charged with defending strategic installations, including oil producing and exporting facilities. Its US-run training centre in Riyadh was the target of a car bomb on 13 November in which five Americans were killed.

Crown Prince Abdullah is not known to speak English. At celebrations, he often joins tribesmen in bedouin dances.

He has six sons, including Prince Mitab who is deputy chief of the National Guard.

Leading article, page 10

Sarajevo celebrates dawn of new era

EMMA DALY
Sarajevo

Trails of red tracer bullets forming an arc across the sky hailed the start of 1996 in Sarajevo, which everyone hopes and many now believe will be a time of peace.

Across the city, where the 10pm curfew was suspended for the holiday that unites Sarajevo of all creeds, the sounds and lights from many parties filled the streets. A British brigadier, an Irish rock star and the Bosnian Foreign Minister mingled at one gathering.

Bono, lead singer of U2, came to celebrate New Year in Sarajevo with Muhamed Sacirbey, the Foreign Minister, and promised to return with the rest of the band for a concert. "I'm very happy to be the first tourist in the new Sarajevo," he said on New Year's Eve.

With light, heat, water, gas, food, clothes on sale and street lights instead of snipers, Sarajevo started the New Year in almost normal circumstances, although the physical destruction, mental scars and barriers of fear remain.

In the shattered library, a bizarre mix of Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian styles intended as a symbol of Bosnia, Bono paused for photographers. "Nothing really prepares you for the destruction, and my first impression was that if people can live through this they must be extraordinary people with a great future," Bono said.

His presence was proof of the changes wrought by Nato's peace implementation force (Pfor) in the past 42 days: celebrities were thin on the ground during the war, except for visits by politicians with troops serving as peace-keepers, and the writer Susan Sontag.

Now many Bosnians are coming back, if only to visit their families over the holidays. One couple, returning from Germany, drove through the Serb-held suburb of Ilidza—a journey still off-limits to most Sarajevoans, terrified by the prospect of entering enemy territory.

Ilidza and the four other Serb-held suburbs that will revert to government rule next month hold Orthodox Christmas next Sunday and New Year a week later. The residents feel there is little to celebrate. The new-found freedom in Sarajevo is a bitter pill for Serbs who besieged the city for so long in an attempt to divide it.

Many plan to leave rather than live under Bosnian government control. Gone are the days when the barren shops of Sarajevo made Ilidza look like a bazaar—fuel there now costs three German marks (£1.3) a litre, three times the price in Sarajevo, though still a far cry from the DM30 Sarajevoans had to pay at the height of the siege.

"All the Serbs are aware of the uncertainty we will face in the future and we are aware of the difficulties we will experience," said Nenad Popovic, a policeman at a Serb checkpoint. "But it is better to leave than to be a second-class citizen."

On Sunday night local politicians, diplomats and aid workers joined ordinary people at the National Theatre to hear the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra play Beethoven's Fifth. "It is a very good weapon—the most effective for hitting infantry targets," said Ephraim Sneh, the health minister and a former army commander, in an interview on Israeli Radio.

Israeli military spokesmen have previously declined to comment on the widely re-



No jobs for the boys: Unemployed workers in Hong Kong wearing paper masks with sad faces to protest about their plight. The unemployment rate in the colony is expected to rise to 3.6 per cent this year, the highest rate for 10 years. These workers said that on the public housing estate where they live 17 per cent are out of work

Peking seeks to break Hong Kong impasse

STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

China has begun the new year by calling for a "new dawn" in Sino-British preparations for the return of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China next year.

Lu Ping, the most senior Chinese official dealing with the colony's affairs, delivered this message in an interview published yesterday by the official New China News Agency. As head of Peking's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs office

was studiously ambiguous in indicating whether or not the deep freeze in relations between Britain and China had begun to thaw.

He spoke approvingly of next week's visit to Peking by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, stating that Britain had given a commitment to co-operate with China but he followed this by saying "we hope that this commitment [to co-operation] will not be restricted to words, but put into practice".

This is the usual view expressed by Chinese officials in recent months when referring to Britain. It indicates that the door is open for better relations but will be firmly closed if Britain pursues policies, such as promoting democracy in Hong Kong, which are anathema to China.

China insists on dealing directly with the Foreign Office in London, rather than having anything to do with Chris Patten, the Governor of Hong Kong, who is blamed for being

"unco-operative" and making what China views as provocative reforms in the political sphere.

Mr Lu, who has recently recovered from a long illness, is a master of ambiguity, using most of his public utterances to offer both carrot and stick. In yesterday's interview, the biggest carry was his assurance that the 150-member Preparatory Committee, set up by China last week, would not try to take over the running of Hong Kong before 1 July 1997.

This assurance was given in

the face of suggestions that China would need a shadow government up and running before the transfer of power. Mr Lu, regarded as a moderate by Britain, is using his authority to dispel this idea.

However the composition of the committee, personally chosen by the senior Communist Party leadership, makes it clear that China will have no truck with people in Hong Kong who are not seen as loyal.

The Hong Kong members of the committee are dominated

by business leaders and prominent personalities who are either long-time "friends" of Peking or have recently been transformed from being pillars of the colonial establishment to becoming loyal supporters of the Chinese government. "We sang for the motherland," was how one of them described their activities.

The committee has no Democratic Party member or other candidates who have consistently won the largest share of the popular vote.

Israelis admit use of banned shells

Jerusalem (Reuters) — A cabinet minister said yesterday that Israeli forces in Lebanon in clashes with Muslim guerrillas use internationally banned shells which spray steel darts.

"It is a very good weapon—the most effective for hitting infantry targets," said Ephraim Sneh, the health minister and a former army commander, in an interview on Israeli Radio.

Israeli military spokesmen have previously declined to comment on the widely re-

ported use of the ammunition, which has also caused civilian and UN casualties in Israel's occupation zone in south Lebanon. Referring to a clash with guerrillas there last week, Mr Sneh said that Israeli soldiers "identified terrorists and fired at them with this ammunition, which we are happy to say did the job".

Unifil, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, says it has protested to Israel about their use.

Three UN peace-keepers were wounded last month by dart shells fired by an Israeli tank at a Norwegian squad on night patrol, a UNifil spokesman said. Israeli security sources said Israeli soldiers had apparently fired on what they thought were guerrillas.

Last July, a four-year-old Lebanese boy and his two sisters, aged 16 and 11, were killed by the banned shells.

A UN peace-keeper was killed by Israeli dart shells in

December 1993, according to a spokesman for Unifil.

Mr Sneh said the ammunition was "completely legitimate". "We are, in effect, fighting infantry—terrorists," he said. "I do not see any ethical constraint here."

Marjayoun, Lebanon (AP) — Guerrillas marked the new year with a Katyusha rocket attack on an Israeli outpost on the Lebanese-Israeli border yesterday. Security sources said no casualties were reported.

IN BRIEF

Raw materials give Moscow a trade boost

Moscow — A boost in raw-materials exports helped Russia's foreign trade soar 27.9 per cent in 1995 to reach \$97.5bn (£65bn). Preliminary estimates show exports climbed more than 31 per cent to \$63bn, compared with \$48bn in 1994. Imports rose 22 per cent to \$34.5bn, said First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets. That left Russia with a trade surplus of \$28.5bn, 43 per cent higher than in 1994. Most of Russia's trade is with countries of the former Soviet Union. The German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, said in an article in *Die Welt* that Russia's resurgent Communists could be defeated in this year's presidential election if pro-reform forces united around a single candidate. AP

Nigerian junta frees another Abiola aide

Lagos — Nigeria's military authorities have freed another aide of the detained presidential claimant Moshood Abiola. Newspapers said Ademola Adeniji-Adele, who had been held without trial for 17 months in the northern city of Kaduna, was freed on Saturday and was expected to return to his home in Lagos. He is the third aide of Mr Abiola, undeclared winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election, to be freed since pressure on the government to release detainees was stepped up in November after nine minority-rights activists were hanged. Reuters

Pope dedicates 1996 to children

Rome — Praying yesterday that he and the rest of the world may live to see 2000, the Pope said adults owed it to children to guarantee a future of peace in the next millennium. The Roman Catholic Church celebrates 1 January as World Peace Day and the Pope decided to dedicate 1996 to children, especially those suffering from war or other violence. "Every child, you can say, is a symbol of human history that begins all over, with tenacious hope," he told tourists and pilgrims in St Peter's Square. AP

Lebanon's year of living less violently

Beirut — A total of 285 people died as a result of violence in Lebanon in 1995, the lowest toll since the civil war ended in 1990. More than half died in clashes between guerrillas and Israeli troops and militias holding an anti-guerrilla zone in south Lebanon, the last active front in the Israeli-Arab conflict. Reuters

Moi guides Kenyans clear of sex manual

Nairobi — President Daniel arap Moi has banned a family-planning book published by the Girl Guides Association of America because it talks about sex. *Family Life* was immoral and promoted promiscuity, the *Daily Nation* quoted Mr Moi as saying. "It talks about sex and I direct that the book be removed from the shelves by the (Kenyan) Girl Guides and the Boy Scouts," the President said in a speech. Reuters

Juppé pushes on with welfare shake-up

MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

Reform of the French welfare system, which precipitated three weeks of strikes and protests in the closing months of last year, will be rushed into law in the next few weeks following the removal over the weekend of the last legal and administrative obstacles to its progress.

The Constitutional Council ruled that the government of Alain Juppé was within its rights to introduce the main reform legislation by ordinance rather than by standard parliamentary procedure of bills and debates. Opposition Socialist MPs had asked the council, which has the last word on constitutional matters, to rule on the constitu-

tionality of accelerating such important legislation in this manner.

Earlier, they had employed blocking tactics to delay preliminary legislation. With the green light thus given, the government published its first two draft ordinances on New Year's Eve, hours after the council had pronounced.

One concerns imposition of a new tax to help pay off the welfare system's accumulated debt: the other sets a 2.1 per cent maximum for increased spending by hospitals and GPs and makes minor changes in reimbursement arrangements for some doctors.

Most practical obstacles to the reforms have also been removed. The "social summit"

convened by Mr Juppé on 21 December gave the unions what they had wanted in terms of recognition and a largely symbolic role in decision-making.

They had already obtained a pledge that all early-retirement arrangements in the public sector would be retained, the suspension of a committee set up to consider changes to public-sector pensions and abolition of a restructuring plan for the nationalised railway company.

The strikes, which paralysed the country until mid-December, are almost over. Public-transport workers in Marseilles, whose strike was yesterday in its 26th day, are still holding out, but their particular grievance relates to local terms and conditions of employment, not to the

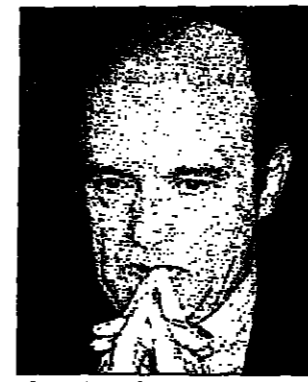
welfare reforms as such. The postal sorting workers in Caen, whose strike was broken by riot police just before Christmas, are back at work.

While the more militant trade-union leaders have warned that the strikes could begin again at any time if the concessions granted by the government do not materialise, one of their number, Marc Blondel, of the Force Ouvrière, sounded a distinctly conciliatory note yesterday. He commented approvingly on President Jacques Chirac's New Year message, which had contained some "openings". In particular, the unions now believe they will be consulted in the drafting of further reform ordinances.

The new conciliatory tone,

however, does not alter the fact that, despite all the concessions he made, Mr Juppé has retained the core of his welfare-reform legislation intact and that he clearly enjoys Mr Chirac's support. The President's tribute to his "courageous action" in his New Year message showed approval for what he was doing, even if his call for more dialogue implied criticism of how he had set about it.

The result is that, as of yesterday, most French people with jobs, and richer pensioners, will find themselves worse off. The new law will cost them 0.5 per cent of total income, including hitherto exempt savings income. They will pay higher national-insurance contributions and much higher "hotel"



Alain Juppé: Has kept his reform plan largely intact

charges for hospital care. However, Mr Juppé's first two ordinances have expressly left the delicate subject of health-service reorganisation and proposed sanctions on overspending doctors for further discussion. Those could well be the next—and bitter—battles.

Upwardly mobile Chinese hail the taxi revolution

TERESA POOLE
Yinchuan

In most countries, there comes a point when economic development produces a defining vehicular symbol of national character. Britain has its red double-decker bus and Thailand the irrepressible three-wheeled tuk-tuk. These days urban Chinese also have their own conveyance of convenience, the yellow *miandi* (literally "bread-van") taxi, nicknamed the "locust" for its tendency to swarm towards any likely fare.

The *miandi*, so called because its shape resembles a leaf—is evidence that many urban

Chinese can now afford to travel by something other than the traditional bicycle. It first appeared in Peking about 1987, and since then the arrival of the yellow "locusts" in any city has provided a highly visible barometer of economic progress.

Lao Yang, 50, was in the vanguard of this revolution when it hit the city of Yinchuan early last year. Yinchuan is the capital of Ningxia, one of the poor inland provinces which China's leaders cite when they talk of the worrying wealth gap between fast-growing coastal regions and the hinterland. Ningxia, in the drought-stricken north-west, remains impover-

ished. But since February even Yinchuan has boasted the *miandi*, one of the last provincial capitals to welcome them.

"At first, people were not sure if they could make money with the *miandi*," said Mr Yang. "Some tried and the result was very good. So people rushed and wanted to be *miandi* drivers."

Mr Yang took to the wheel of a *miandi* four months ago. "I now think of myself as a *geithu*," he said, using the expression for a self-employed entrepreneur, albeit one mired in old-style bureaucracy. "I have to pay 21 different kinds of taxes," he groaned.

In a good month Mr Yang can

clear a profit of 3,000 yuan (£230), about five times his old salary as a driver at the state Foreign Tourism Bureau and, before that, the Transport Bureau. He works up to 16 hours a day, seven days a week, and in three years will own his vehicle under a hire-purchase deal with the Transport Bureau.

Mr Yang is the sort of upwardly mobile character who could be found in the south and east of China more than a decade ago and who is emerging in places like Yinchuan.

He says Yinchuan now has 300 *miandi*s to add to the car-taxis introduced in the Eighties. "The *miandi* drivers earn the

most," he said, although the cross-city fare is just 10 yuan (77p). "More people can afford *miandi*s than car-taxis."

Yinchuan's growing middle classes can be seen clambering in and out of *miandi*s.

"They are people who do private business, like dealing in steel, or wool traders. People who have mobile phones. Some of them can afford to take a *miandi* to work every day, even if it is a short distance," said Mr Yang.

For Mr Yang, it is not only the increased earnings that matter. "I don't like to be controlled by others," he said, thinking back to his former life. "When I

worked at the Tourist Bureau, on Tuesday and Friday mornings every week we had to go to political meetings to be taught about government policy or traffic regulations. Now it is only on the fifth of every month for two hours. We just read the Ningxia Transportation Newspaper," he added.

But old habits die hard, especially in remote parts of China. Mr Yang plans to work as a *miandi* driver for several years. "After that, I want to go back to my old work unit [the Tourism Bureau]," he said, explaining that it still holds his personal file. "I want them to take care of me when I am retired and sick."

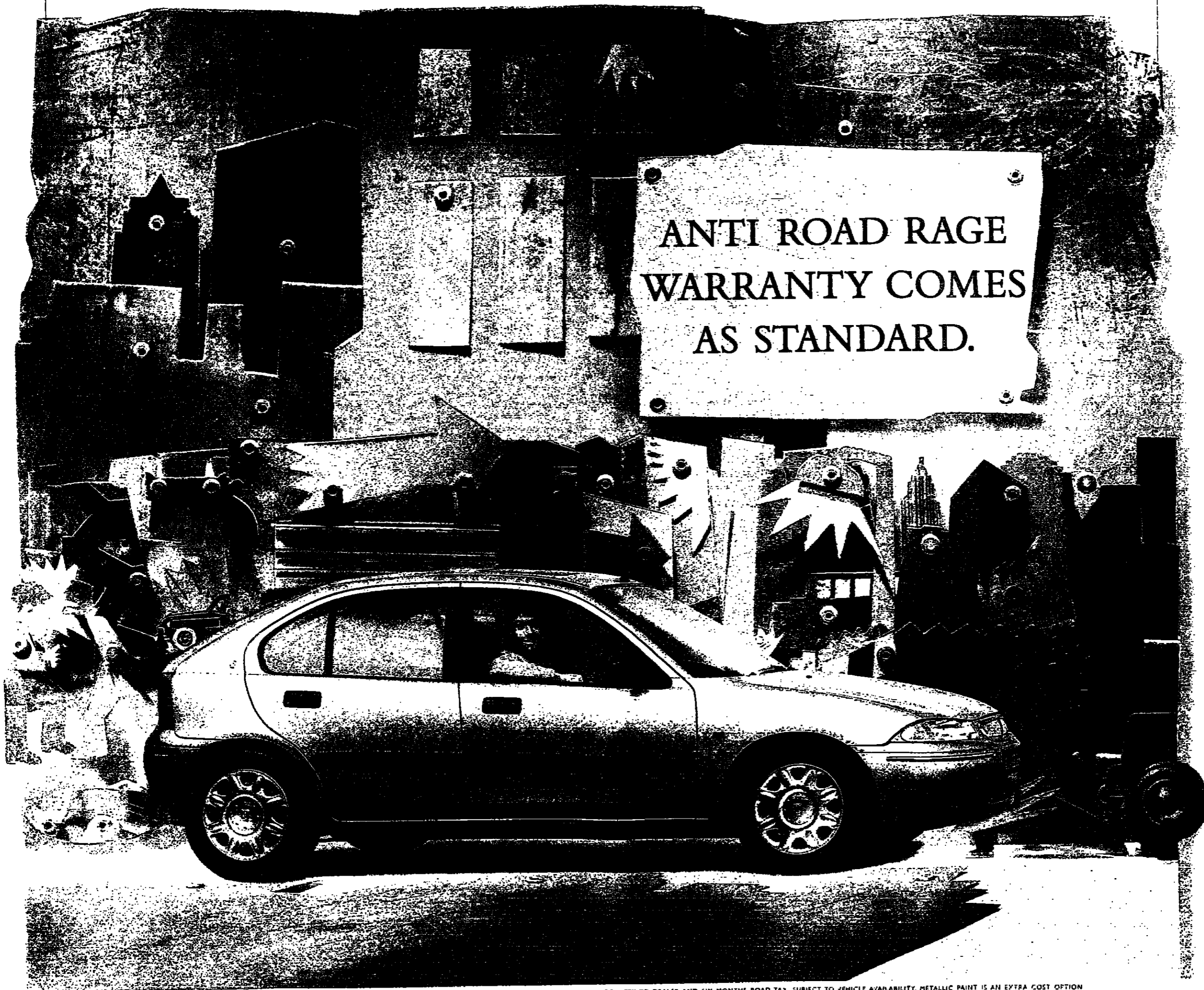


Nodding off: A Bangladeshi woman falls asleep at an anti-poverty rally in Dhaka attended by about 200,000 people from underdeveloped villages Photograph: Reuters

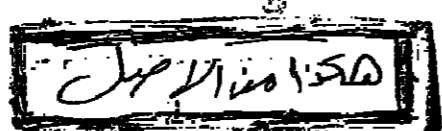
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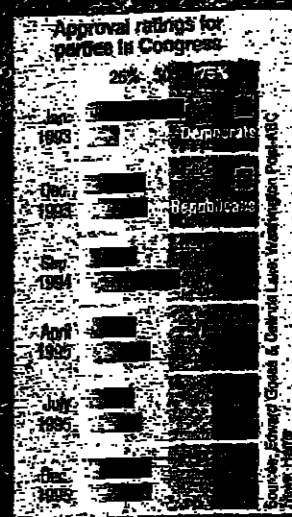
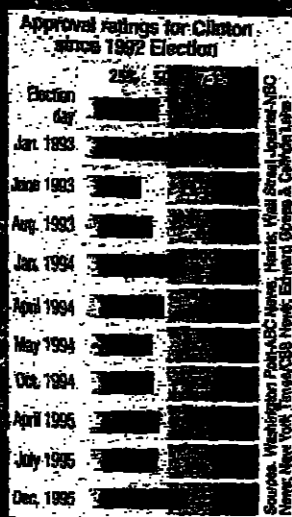


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A big year up at the White House

America's politicians may be gearing up for November's presidential election, but the nation is in cynical mood, says John Carlin



Five Republicans who would be President



Bob Dole Wounded Second World War hero, Republican majority leader in the Senate who has served in Congress for 35 years. The consummate Washington insider, he has taken instructions from the polls and joined the chorus denouncing the ineptitudes of "big government". Described as "Bob Dough" in a recent cartoon, he displays clarity only in his despair to win the presidency at the third and final time of asking.



Steve Forbes Hear to the nation, publisher of *Forbes*, has surprised by joining ahead of the pack, chasing Bob Dole, though he remains far back in second place in the polls. He owes his current flash in the pan success to a spate of TV advertisements selling a simple idea: swap the progressive tax system for a flat-rate tax of 17 per cent and, hey presto, Washington will be purified and the economy will grow.



Phil Gramm Texas Congressman, conservative Republican, has been a vocal critic of the Clinton administration. He is a strong supporter of Dole and is seen as a potential vice-presidential pick. He is a strong supporter of Dole and is seen as a potential vice-presidential pick.



Rick Warren California Governor, a moderate Republican, has been a vocal critic of the Clinton administration. He is a strong supporter of Dole and is seen as a potential vice-presidential pick. He is a strong supporter of Dole and is seen as a potential vice-presidential pick.



John McCain Arizona Senator, a moderate Republican, has been a vocal critic of the Clinton administration. He is a strong supporter of Dole and is seen as a potential vice-presidential pick. He is a strong supporter of Dole and is seen as a potential vice-presidential pick.

This is the serious stuff happening in America today: the middle classes, increasingly dependent on two incomes to sustain the material standards enjoyed by previous generations, do not rise in protest in response to the stagnation of their wages because they live in constant fear of losing their jobs. The Dow-Jones index breaks new records almost daily and Wall Street traders raise cheers at the news that national productivity is improving and that yet another company has "downsized" to cut costs. If there is a difference between the predicaments of Americans and Western Europeans, it is this: the gap between rich and poor in America is the widest in the industrialised world, and is becoming wider at a faster rate than anywhere else.

By way of compensation for the shortage of bread, one of the circus diversions on offer this year will be that old favourite, the race for the White House. Enjoyed mostly on television, the appeal of the presidential election contest derives from its capacity to combine the thrill of organised sport with the drama of the chat show. There was a hope that 1996 might see the injection of an

elevating third factor, something noble and visionary, but that faded with General Colin Powell's decision in November to put family before country.

The election spectacle will be conducted in two parts. First, the Republican candidates, a baleful lot described in one *New York Times* column as an appropriate cast for a film noir, will be tearing each other to pieces in television commercials in an attempt to secure their party's nomination. But the audience for this spectacle will not be making the networks rich. An indicator was provided by CNN in November. When the leading Republican candidates all appeared together for a debate on *Larry King Live*, only 300,000 households tuned in - fewer than those who watch reruns of *Are you being served?* on public television.

The chances that interest will perk up in part two of the election are reduced by the likelihood that Bob Dole will be the man to go head-to-head against President Clinton in the second half of the year. Mr Dole has gravitas but no charm. Mr Clinton has charm but no gravitas. This presents media commentators with a problem. What they will do is strive to

make up for the low quality of the drama by emphasising the intensity of the sport, by conveying a sense that, uncaring as the two candidates might be, they are evenly matched and sure to engage in a race to the finish.

If all this seems rather cynical, it has the merit of reflecting fairly faithfully the public mood. The Republicans won control of Congress for the first time in 40 years in November 1994 - not, as conservative commentators maintained at the time, because of an "ideological" shift in the American landscape but because, by campaigning against "Washington business as usual", they tapped into a rich vein of national disgust. The voters' hope was that honourable government would somehow translate into a stronger economy, higher wages and more secure jobs. The Republicans, however, have failed to temper the disgust and, having raised expectations so high, have succeeded only in deepening the cynicism.

They did not, for example, live up to their promise to address the question of campaign finance reform. So long as each senator finds himself having to raise \$6m in order to

be elected, so long will law-making in America be an exercise disproportionately determined by moneyed special interests.

No more glaring example exists of the institutional corruption to which Washington politicians are prey. The zealous Republican "freshmen" realised this when they arrived on Capitol Hill a year ago. But now, having tasted power and

by a non-partisan group called American Talk Issues found that 73 per cent of Americans persisted in believing that "politicians work for themselves and their own careers, not the people they represent". 81 per cent believed "government tax policies help large corporations and the wealthy more than average people".

Popular perceptions are supported by the evidence of the

new year has provided a fitting conclusion to the year of dashed hopes. The disagreement between the White House and Congress which precipitated the shut-down, keeping 280,000 federal workers away from work and thousands more without pay since 16 December, goes to the heart of the national debate unleashed by Newt Gingrich and his Republican foot-soldiers at the start of 1995.

Both Democrats and Republicans actually do start their arguments in the real world, from a recognition of the anxiety that is assailing the voting middle classes. But the manner in which the debate has been conducted has served to reinforce the economic malaise as to reinforce widespread dissatisfaction with the politicians in Washington.

The impression is created that ordinary people's economic concerns are viewed by the politicians, who spend heavily on focus groups to establish precisely what those concerns are, as simply the raw material with which to shape their electoral sales pitches.

One of the principal arguments test-marketed by the Republicans to win the 1994 congressional election goes like

this: America will become prosperous and happy again if it can destroy "the liberal welfare state" (or, as Senator Phil Gramm puts it, "get people off the cart and start pulling with the rest of us") and balance the budget within a biblically resonant seven years. Mr Clinton's Democrats, bereft of alternative plans of their own, merely disagree.

The likely winner in this particular game is Mr Clinton. Simply by standing still, he has given the pleasingly presidential impression of defending the American people against yet another piece of congressional chicanery. Since the Republicans have defined balancing the federal budget as their most sacred and urgent task, it is hardly surprising that large sectors of the public should have viewed as sordid the Republicans' resolve to cut capital gains taxes or grant rewards to their electoral benefactors - while proposing cuts in health care for the elderly and the abolition of benefits to single teenage mothers.

None of which bears any great relevance to the serious economic questions of the day, determined as they are not by governments but the uncertain-

ties of the free market. Wall Street continues to be perky; the middle classes continue to fret, and America's poor continue to lead lives of deeper indignity and less hope than the unemployed of Britain, Germany or France. The only thing one can say about the American year in politics is that, for the moment, things do not look too good for whoever turns out to be the 1996 Republican presidential candidate.

While a year ago the conventional Washington wisdom was that Mr Clinton was dead in the water, today he is the punters' favourite. He stands higher in the polls than at any point in the past two years, comfortably ahead of the Republicans in general and Mr Dole in particular. However, three years ago the media were hailing the arrival of a new Democratic Era. A year ago it was the Republican Era. Eleven months from now, who knows what might happen?

And, now that the Republicans' revolutionary experiment is fizzling out and the two parties will resume their traditional battle for the soft American centre, who - apart from the interested parties themselves - cares?

The appeal of the election contest is like the thrill of organised sport combined with the drama of the TV chat show

discovered that it is far easier to raise money as an incumbent - because an elected legislator is in a far stronger position to provide favours and influence to wealthy donors than a would-be legislator - they have concurred with their seniors that the issue does not represent as high a priority as they had initially thought.

Which is one reason why last August, eight months into the Republican "revolution", a poll

vast increase in donations to the Republican Party by the likes of Philip Morris, the tobacco giant, since the 1994 election. No bigger campaign donors exist than the corporations that run America's armaments industry; this might help explain why Congress resolved last year to award \$7bn more in defence spending than the Pentagon had requested.

The government shut-down that has straddled the old and



Hockney: it's round 2

David Hockney has already announced his intention to give a Royal Academy lecture on why *Boots the Chemist* and the police don't understand pictures. But I see that the new year has diverted his wrath from the arrest of Julia Somerville, and he has a new target in his sights. It is his erstwhile friend Melvyn Bragg. Television's best-known arts commentator does not understand television or its artistic possibilities, thunders Britain's best-known artist.

In a heartfelt letter in the new edition of *Modern Painters* magazine, Hockney writes of how he defends painting every day, but that the art world in England seems to be obsessed with "grunge", avoiding all the real issues. And what is the real issue? Apparently, the artistic abuse of television. Hockney says: "Why, for instance, has the TV picture not altered for 30 years, whereas the illusion of

reproduced sound has 'improved' enormously? Who controls what the picture is like? Not, it seems to me, people who think about pictures a lot. It's now making the world seem all the same colour and lacking any space or texture - what has that done to us? No photograph of a landscape can compete with a Monet or Van Gogh and many people know this, yet the art world thinks the TV picture has got nothing to do with it. I think TV is a very unvisual medium. Melvyn Bragg doesn't really understand this."

To Maggie

Taking a breather at the South Mimms service station on the interchange of the M25 and A1 north of London, I notice the plaque marking the opening of the service station by Mrs Thatcher and find that she is commemorated here as Margaret Thatcher FRS. This is thought to be the only public place where the former Prime Minister's academic honour is thus emblazoned. But why? Is

there a link between being a Fellow of the Royal Society and motorway service stations? Perhaps an expert on etiquette can enlighten me.

St Nic

What do you get the girl who has everything? A clue is contained in the prenuptial demands of the Hollywood actress Patricia Arquette, when asked for her



Tough love: Arquette

hand in marriage by the scowling star of *Leaving Las Vegas*, Nicolas Cage. Miss Arquette set him on a quest to prove his devotion. Her needs included: the autograph of the reclusive novelist JD Salinger, a black orchid, a wedding dress from a tribe in northern Tibet and a fibreglass statue from a Los Angeles hamburger restaurant.

Cage bought a purple orchid and painted it black, and found a letter signed by Salinger in a specialist autograph shop, he relates in an interview in the February edition of *Esquire*. At this point Miss Arquette, like the orchid, wilted, though it took her a further eight years to marry Cage, presumably because of her inflexibility over wedding dress designs.

The courtship might have been briefer and less challenging if she had questioned him on his social conscience. Few women could have resisted the kind of new man who makes the sacrifice for his fellow humans beings that Cage reveals. "I will never, ever park in a handicapped space," he says. "It's not my style and I think that people who do are inviting some kind of bad karma."

Cry havoc

Before Christmas, I explained how the strikes in Paris were upsetting the fashion world by causing folk to walk to work. Now, the social editor of *Harpers & Queen*, Lady Celestria Noel - a name that predestines one at birth to be the social editor at *Harpers & Queen* - tells me I underestimated the havoc that was caused.

Worse than the cream of society arriving late for the Debutantes' Ball, the real problem was a result of all the Paris socialites overestimating the time it would take them to get there because of the strikes - and arriving early. According to Lady Celestria, this "flustered the organisers, as such a thing had never been heard of in such fashionable circles".

Mogged

Cats can be awfully expensive to feed these days. Could this have anything to do with the cost of advertising cat food? The advertising agency BMP DDB Needham, which has a serious feline interest, holding the accounts for Purrrfect, Arthur's, Felix and Choosy, reveals in its internal newsletter that the total billing for the account is more than £8.5m.

Awful Elvis?

It's so hard to hear clearly on those transatlantic phone calls. Or maybe the staff at Rolling Stone magazine in New York had just had a good lunch. Either way, they con-



Unkindest cut: Costello

tacted the British rock star Elvis Costello for a tribute after the death of Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead, and reported Costello as saying that Jerry "sang with the awfulest voice". This did seem a slightly churlish comment to make about a chap so recently departed. And sure enough, in the current issue Costello points out that he actually said Garcia "sang with the author's voice".

If you say the latter very quickly, then say "awfulest" in a New York accent, you can just about see how the confusion might arise. For Costello, the most literary of songwriters, the unkindest cut was that he could be thought to have used an expression like "awfulest". "Is there even such a word?" he asked. "He's never heard the Grateful Dead on a bad night."

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Portillo puts his foot in it again

Even for Michael Portillo it was a bit rich. Yesterday he accused Emma Nicholson of a "history of disloyalty" and accused her of stabbing Margaret Thatcher in the back. The man who has probably done more than any other politician to undermine John Major's leadership dared to tar another with his brush.

If the claims had come from a trusty stalwart such as Douglas Hurd or from the dogged Willie Whitelaw, then perhaps the remarks might have been accepted as justified. But listening to Mr Portillo was like hearing Machiavelli condemn duplicity. Zsa Zsa Gabor complain about the divorce rate or Graham Taylor moan about opponents playing the long ball game in football. It was not just that it was hard to take him seriously; his comments once again prove his striking capacity to annoy and alarm people. The problem is not that Portillo is self-confident; it's that his self-confidence blinds him so completely to his own shortcomings.

By making his intervention Mr Portillo showed once again how prepared he was to put his own interests and views ahead of his party's. He must have taken lessons in diplomacy from his portly subordinate at the Ministry of Defence, Nicholas Soames. Having watched Mr Soames blow himself up by diagnosing the Princess of Wales as being "in the advanced stages of paranoia", Mr Portillo adopted a similarly robust style towards Ms Nicholson.

Like his ministerial colleague, Mr Portillo suffers from believing that grandiosity makes for stature: he does not realise how ridiculous he can sound. For in the case of Ms Nicholson — as with the Princess — everyone knows that there is enough truth in what she says to make her actions justifiable.

Many voters fear that the Conservative Party is either heading for permanent mediocrity and muddling through or a strange place of weird, liberal beliefs and ill-judged rhetoric called Planet Portillo. So when Ms Nicholson named Mr Portillo's attitude to Europe and his jingoistic rant at last year's party conference as factors in her departure, many Tory MPs would have nodded in private agreement.

This was the moment for Mr Portillo to nurse his wounds and stay quiet: that way he would have won at least some Brownie points with the party faithful. As it is, he simply could not button his lip. Yesterday's outburst was yet more proof of what a liability he would be as either leader of the party or the country. His remarks seemed only to confirm Ms Nicholson as a woman wronged by lurching Tories.

Mr Portillo's does not know when to speak up and when to be silent. Last June, when John Major called a leadership contest, was his opportunity to come out from behind the arras, where he stood hidden for so long, with dagger drawn. But he hesitated, lost his nerve and blew his chance to make his case.

As a result, he was outmanoeuvred by John Redwood, who emerged as the standard bearer of the party's right-wing. At that stage Mr Portillo should have recognised his failure and concentrated on repairing his burnt and broken bridges to the majority of the Conservative Party. Instead he made his intemperate speech at the Tory conference, which has helped to precipitate another bout of public blood-letting. It seems 1996 is going to be a bad year for Mr Major. Judging by his performance on New Year's Day, it could be an even worse one for Mr Portillo.

Shifting sands in Saudi Arabia

It is impossible to understate the centrality of Saudi Arabia to the stability of the Middle East. So Western countries should be relieved at the temporary hand-over of power in Saudi Arabia to Crown Prince Abdullah. Given fears for the health of King Fahd and a possible succession crisis, the change spells stability. The Crown Prince has been number two in the government, and although thought to be more conservative than his half-brother he is expected to carry on with business as usual.

That is important for Britain, for which the \$20bn Al-Yamamah arms-for-oil package is the defence industry's biggest weapons contract.

Yet stability in Saudi Arabia is important for other reasons: as the Gulf war showed, the kingdom is a vital restraint on the territorial ambitions of regional powers such as Iraq and Iran. Serious and persistent unrest in a country that is custodian of the Islamic shrines of Mecca and Medina would unsettle the region and might set back the peace process with Israel. Not least significant, Saudi Arabia is the location of a quarter of the world's oil reserves.

Saudi Arabia is in a vulnerable position: there has never been more potential for unrest and disturbance, as the handover does not make the kingdom's administration secure. Technically, King Fahd could return to power, once he has recovered, leading to fresh uncertainty. The Crown Prince's fitness to rule might yet be contested by rival relatives. At 71, he is hardly younger than the King: he may

not enjoy power for long. A succession crisis may have been postponed rather than averted.

Regardless of his appointment, the 60-year-old monarchy must face two difficult issues if it is to survive. First, it must find a way of neutralising the small, but vociferous opposition. A car bomb in November outside an American-run training centre for the Saudi National Guard demonstrated how deep within the country Islamic terrorists could penetrate. That threat could increase in years to come, particularly if the Saudi regime fails to respond to a desire for a more Islamic style of government.

To forestall the growth of opposition to their rule, the Saudi royal family must continue to broaden its political base. This process was begun by King Fahd through the establishment of a consultative council, made up of appointees drawn from the great and good. The council has gained influence, but unless the regime moves further towards consensus government it, like every other absolute monarchy in history, will be doomed.

The second task is to reduce the kingdom's dependence on oil, which has left the country in financial trouble, with borrowings growing and state and corporate budgets under pressure. Diversification is easier said than done: any Saudi ruler will face opposition to change from at least some entrenched family interests. The challenge will be for the new ruler to keep his large extended family (including 6,000 princes) happy without alienating the rest of his country.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Human rights issues legitimise terrorism

From Mr Randhir Singh Bains
Sir: Professor Trevor Hartley rightly states ("Judgment on the Rock", 28 December) that the wild criticism of the European Court over the Gibraltar killings is unjustified. However, the court decision needs to be seen in a wider context, for human rights are no longer the moral issue they were when the UN Convention was signed in 1948.

Since then the issue of human rights has become highly politicised, thereby providing terrorists, secessionists and other radicals with a new mechanism to legitimise violent campaigns.

One only needs to see how the number of human rights organisations has grown by leaps and bounds, especially in countries that are facing an armed rebellion or terrorism.

Some of these organisations are genuine and are doing wonderful work, but many were set up by terrorist sympathisers.

These organisations highlight the violation of human rights by security forces with great ferocity, but mention the atrocities committed by terrorists only in passing. Sometimes they even manage to get Western human rights groups involved in their campaigns by giving false information.

By condemning Britain rather than the terrorists, the court's decision has confirmed that the movement for the protection of human rights has not only lost its original purpose but has also been hijacked by men of violence.

Under these circumstances, the only honourable option open to Britain should be to withdraw from the European Court of Human Rights and introduce its own Bill of Rights.

Yours faithfully,
RANDHIR SINGH BAINS
Gaunt Hill,
Essex
1 January

From Professor David Marsland
Sir: You published on 28 December two letters arguing that participation of Sinn Féin in all-party talks should not be conditional on the decommissioning of IRA weaponry. Your readers should not be deceived by their logic-chopping disregard of relevant facts. Sinn Féin has supported its friends in taking up arms to murder thousands of British soldiers, policemen and civilians — and this in one of the few genuine democracies in the world. They represent a tiny minority of the Northern Ireland electorate — 10 per cent at best.

In my opinion, we should not be talking to them at all. They should be behind bars. But if we have to talk with them, we must at least ensure that their friends' capacity to renew their murderous campaign is removed first. Yours sincerely,
DAVID MARSLAND
London, SW3

Israeli-PLO peace talks continue

From Mr Robert Kirk
Sir: After interviewing Hanan Ashrawi, Robert Fisk concludes that "if Syria signed up for peace before the final Israel-Palestinian negotiations, it would leave Palestinians as the only party in the Middle East conflict without a peace treaty" ("Precise defender of the Palestinian cause", 18 December).

First, there are several Middle East conflicts: Iraq/Kuwait (which caused a war involving 30 nations), Iraq/Kurds, Turkey/Kurds, etc; yet it is the Arab-Israeli one that looks to be on the road to resolution, despite your correspondent's contrary opinion.

Second, the 1993 Israel-PLO peace agreement was exactly that, and thus a watershed in Middle East history. In return for the PLO's renunciation of violence and its pledge to remove the clauses in its covenant that call for Israel's destruction and the "liq-

uidation of the Zionist presence", Israel recognised the PLO and agreed to hand over Gaza and most of the West Bank.

Two years on, those genocidal clauses remain, and more than 170 Israelis have been killed by Palestinians opposed to peace. Yet the Israeli government relentlessly pursues peace by withdrawing troops and expanding Palestinian self-rule.

If Mr Fisk wishes to gauge the chances for full Israeli-Palestinian peace, he might consider the words of the Israeli Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, who said that if the clauses in the Palestinian covenant calling for Israel's destruction are not cancelled by March 1996, "the [peace] train will be halted". Let Mr Fisk put that to Palestinian spokespersons; and let him ask, too, why the Western media have been silent on this.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT KIRK
Salford, Greater Manchester

Hollow reforms in Turkey

From Mr Tony Benn, MP

and others
Sir: On 13 December the European Parliament voted to ratify the Customs Union with Turkey. It qualified its assent by a resolution calling on the Turkish government and parliament to continue reform in order "to guarantee an ongoing improvement of the human rights situation" in Turkey. However, recent "democratic reforms", pushed through by Tansu Ciller's government to prepare the ground for acceptance into the Customs Union, are already appearing hollow.

Victims of Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law warned that the limited amendments agreed by the Turkish parliament did not guarantee freedom of expression in Turkey. Ironically, as the European Parliament discussed the Customs Union, 10 human rights activists were being indicted in Ankara under Article 159 of the Turkish penal code for state-

ments deemed insulting to the laws of the republic. Spokespersons for some of the present government parties have clearly stated that they will not be bound by any EU resolutions on human rights, or by the international Court of Justice. Nor is there any sign of a let-up in the military campaign against the Kurdish population.

In contrast, on 14 December, Abdullah Ocalan, PKK chairman, responded to the European Parliament's appeal for the Turkish government and Kurdish organisations to find a "non-violent and political solution" to the conflict by declaring a unilateral ceasefire.

It is vital that the spirit and letter of the European Parliament resolution on the Customs Union is observed, and pressure immediately exerted on the incoming Turkish government to respond in a positive way to the PKK's initiative.

Yours faithfully,
TONY BENN
BRUCE KENT
HAROLD PINTER
London, SW1

We need to use our nuclear power

From Professor Ernest Pollard

Sir: Recently it has developed that there is consensus among scientists that there is global warming going on and that a principal factor in causing it is the CO₂ resulting from human affairs. A major culprit is the excessive use of fossil fuel. It is ironic that, almost at the same time, the demise of nuclear power stations in the UK is announced. No more will be built.

Nuclear power stations contribute nothing to the CO₂ content of the atmosphere; in fact, they contribute nothing of any harm at all, unlike a coal-fired power station which emits carcinogens and appreciable radioactivity as well as the CO₂.

The nuclear power industry has been destroyed by a combination of misinformation, zealots and the greed of the purveyors of fossil fuel. The evils that have been evaded are nearly all imaginary.

A greatly increased dependence on electric power, extending to travel, and the use of nuclear reactors to supply that power, would turn the situation around. We need to move to adopt that way of life as a means to avoid a future catastrophe.

Let me add that I am implacably opposed to the use of nuclear weapons and have written and spoken in opposition to them. Also I have worked with radiation for 60 of my 89 years. Yours faithfully,
ERNEST POLLARD
(Evan Pugh Professor
Pennsylvania State University)
Niton, Isle of Wight

It's all in a mile

From Mr Barry Sheppard

Sir: "Glasgow - It's Miles Better" (Alix Sharkey, 1 January) isn't much of a slogan when printed and read like that, I agree.

Ty saying it aloud, however, while mentally moving the apostrophe, and you will hear "Glasgow - it's Mile's Better". A pleasingly cheeky and, I am sure, not accidental snook cocked at Edinburgh and its Royal Mile.

Yours faithfully,
BARRY SHEPPARD
Penryn, Cornwall

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. (Fax 0171-293 2656; e-mail letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

More research on assisted places

From Mr David J. Woodhead

Sir: Professor Joan Freeman's assertions about the assisted places scheme (letter, 22 December) are based on research which the researchers themselves admitted was flawed.

The study by Edwards, Fitz and Whitty was conducted in the early years of the scheme, although not published until 1980. The authors confessed that "we did not aspire to neutrality". They admitted that their sample of assisted place pupils "falls short of the representativeness for which we had hoped".

In fact, they interviewed only 157 pupils (and 90 of their parents) from half a dozen schools

in three areas of the country. On the other hand, Professor Freeman prefers to ignore research conducted by MORI four years ago based on a national sample of almost 3,500 pupils from 31 schools. It is this which shows at least four-fifths of assisted place pupils coming from working-class and lower middle-class homes. She should also remember that the average household income of parents of assisted place holders is £10,600 and that more than 40 per cent of places are free because their household incomes are less than £9,500. Yours faithfully,
DAVID J. WOODHEAD
National Director
Independent Schools
Information Service
London, SW1
22 December

Post-haste perhaps

From Mr Frank Card

Sir: "Second deliveries will continue", says Ken Wright, the Royal Mail's assistant managing director (Letters, 30 December). "No second delivery has been withdrawn and none will be."

All this must be very comforting for those who actually have a second delivery. I have lived in Cressing for nearly 30 years, and it is true that the second delivery has not been withdrawn; even the Royal Mail cannot withdraw what it has never provided.

But perhaps this is unfair. Our post arrives at any time between 8am and 2pm. Could it be that on some days we get a first delivery and sometimes a second, but never both? We are told by Mr Wright that 90 per cent of mail is delivered on the first delivery. Could he ask the Royal Mail statisticians to explain how that figure is affected if one-delivery areas are removed from the equation? Yours faithfully,
FRANK CARD
Cressing, Essex

How to enjoy the midwinter festival

From Mr Glyn Edwards

Sir: I do not know where Mary Kenny gets her drab view of atheists from ("Meanings of Christmas", 28 December).

Our household has just had a splendid time as numerous adults and children ate, drank, exchanged presents, laughed, played games, reminisced and enjoyed themselves from 24

Motorist's misery

From Ms Carolyn Beckingham

Sir: I had my first experience of being driven on the M25 last Friday. South Mims service station was the point at which the party took a wrong turning and had to make a detour via Luton. Here is my list of how to prevent motorists suffering from stress.

Let signposts make it clear whether one is facing east, west, south or north. Let them be at an angle where they can be seen at night by someone with not more than average eyesight who has to steer a car while reading them. Let a town that is signposted at one roundabout also be signposted at the next.

Let other drivers remember that no one's driving is improved by being booted at, especially when searching for the right exit. Better still, let us have better public transport, both for private travellers and freight. Yours faithfully,
CAROLYN BECKINGHAM
Lewes, East Sussex
21 December

Divine, dear, let's hear it for Pamelanderson

Yesterday I brought you an exclusive league table of the top 10 boys' names of 1995, based on newspaper headlines rather than birth columns, and it will probably have come as no surprise to learn that the runaway winner in the Name of the Year stakes was OJ. It is most uncommon to find a set of initials outstripping all names, though it has happened in the past — I think it was last year that FC did well, due to the evidence at the time of FC de Klerk.

(Of course, initials do present problems, not least because it is always difficult to know what to call an initialled person when introduced. If someone says, "Oh, let me introduce you to AS Byatt", do you call her Antonia or AS? This is not a fanciful problem. PJ O'Rourke once asked on radio what his name was, and he admitted it was Patrick. Yet when he appeared on *Have I Got News For You?* recently, Angus Deayton called him "Peter". Maybe, as befits a humorist, O'Rourke gives out a different first name to each programme chairman.)

But enough of this and on to the top 10 girls' names of 1995. Some of the favourites of yesteryear have almost vanished, whether they were common names such as Joanna and Maggie or far-fetched names such as



MILES KINGSTON

Madonna and Kiri. Some, of course, enjoy one season of popularity and then vanish again into the wardrobe never to reappear, like Zola, Pamela and Fatima.

But there are always others ready to take over, and it was nice to see a return to the top for Elizabeth. Indeed, it was hard to know how to tabulate Elizabeth, which appears in so many different forms. Sometimes it is Elizabeth (as in Queen Elizabeth II or Elizabeth Bennett), sometimes in diminutive form as in Liz Hurley, and sometimes even in nickname form as in Betty Boothroyd. Should one class them all as Elizabeth? In that case it certainly would have been this year's winner. We eventually decided to list them separately and give other names more of a chance.

Another problem came with Diana,

commonly shortened to Di (except in France where Princess Diana is still, I believe, endearingly called Laddie Dee). Having shortened the name to Di, the papers now generally expand it again to "Poor Di" or "Brave Di". This is almost as maddening as the papers' insistence on calling Prince William "Wills". No one is called Wills unless he manufactures tobacco. Though perhaps he is so called to distinguish him from Will, as in Will Carling.

Enough of this and on to our list of the top 10 girls' names in 1996. Last year's positions are in brackets.

1. Diana.....(3)
2. Divine.....(-)
3. Pamelanderson.....(-)
4. Camilla.....(7)
5. Elizabeth.....(9)
6. Janet.....(-)
7. Emma.....(-)
8. Betty.....(-)
9. Rosemary.....(-)
10. Bjork.....(-)

No surprises in the first two, I think. Pamelanderson is an unusual name, but one never hears the two parts separated. (Perhaps this is an adhesive property of the name Anderson, as one also hears the composite male name Civenanderson, who is never referred to just as Clive, presumably to avoid confusion with the more

famous Clive James.) Elizabeth was made popular by the Queen and by *Pride and Prejudice*, while Camilla was made popular by the Prince of Wales. Incidentally, was it not Dillie Keene who renamed Camilla as "Camilla Park-and-Ride"? Nice one, Dillie (your name, by the way, is rather lower down the league at No 86).

Janet came from nowhere this year, thanks to the untiring media appearances of Janet Street-Porter, and so did Rosemary after the West trial. (Interestingly, the name Myra has come back up at about 15 or 16.) Betty did strongly throughout the year, thanks to the heroic work of Betty Boothroyd, who seems to be the only person in Parliament with any authority and who is actually thought by a very large foreign TV audience to be our Prime Minister.

Emma made a late appearance thanks to early going by Emma Thompson and a final sprint by Emma Nicholson, of whom no one had heard before and may never again. Bjork is a total and slightly baffling newcomer. I believe it is a pet Lapp name for a reindeer. Others which were there or thereabouts were Naomi, Monica, Steffi and Hillary. But well done to all the names involved and see you again (or some of you) this time next year.

JPY 20.1.96

What price to shore up the Tories?

Ulster Unionists could make or break this government, but Major holds the trump card, says Colin Brown

By relying on the support of the Ulster Unionists to steer the Government through to a general election in 1997, John Major is playing for high stakes. Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, interrupted his new year recess yesterday to reassure the Dublin government that the defection of Emma Nicholson to the Liberal Democrats may have changed the arithmetic in the Commons, but it has not changed government policy.

The Government would not allow itself to be in a lock to the Ulster Unionists, he insisted. "The Government will do its duty according to what it considers to be right," he said. He clearly felt he had to redress the balance after Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionists' security spokesman, had played his party's ace card, confirming at the weekend that the UUP would support the Government in a confidence vote – providing it was in the interests of Northern Ireland.

There are parallels here with the last days of the Labour government in the late Seventies, when Jim Callaghan depended on the votes of an odd alliance of the minor nationalist parties to keep going from day to day, not knowing when the end would come. The gas pipeline now under

construction between Scotland and Northern Ireland is iron testimony to the bargaining that may go on in the smoke-filled rooms when a government has lost its majority.

Although its completion required a change in European rules, the pipeline was first mooted by Labour ministers in talks with some of the Northern Ireland MPs on whom the Callaghan government was relying after its Lib-Lab pact broke down.

Ultimately, not even the promise of a gas pipeline could keep that government alive: the plug was finally pulled by Frank Maguire, an Independent Irish nationalist who travelled from his pub in Fermanagh and South Tyrone to abstain in person in the confidence vote on 28 March, 1979.

Labour lost by 311 votes to 310, and his abstention brought the Government down in a night of high Commons drama. I can recall Dennis Skinner pulling at Mr Maguire's sleeve, pleading with him behind the Speaker's chair to save Labour from disaster, as the voting took place. Immediately after the vote Mr Callaghan announced he would go to the country. Two days later, at around 3pm on 30 March, we witnessed one of the bloody consequences of that vote when Airey Neave, Margaret

Thatcher's chief strategist and who would have been the next Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, was murdered, killed by an INLA car bomb as he drove up the exit ramp of the members' car park under Big Ben.

The two events – the fall of the Government with an Irish abstention, and the assassination of Airey Neave – underline the risks facing Mr Major if he makes a false move in his approach to the 12 Ulster Unionists

Major believes that negotiating teams could help break the impasse in the peace process

now offering to come to his aid. On the one hand, Mr Major needs the support of the Ulstermen to buy time for his Government while they wait for the upturn in the economy and another tax-cutting Budget before a spring 1997 election. On the other hand, prevarication could imperil the peace process and prompt a return of the bloody violence.

There is fanciful talk at Westminster of a place in a Tory cabinet for David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, but there will be no formal pact with the Unionists. The price that Mr Trimble will exact in return for the votes of the nine UU MPs and Ian Paisley's three Democratic Unionist Party MPs is nothing as crude as a piece of pipeline or a seat at Cabinet.

Mr Trimble has set out two key demands: no compromise on the Government's insistence that the IRA should begin decommissioning before Sinn Féin can be admitted to the all-party talks on the future of Northern Ireland; and early elections in Northern Ireland to a new Ulster body.

The idea of an elected body was included at Mr Major's insistence in the "twin-track" agreement with John Bruton on the eve of President Clinton's visit in late November. That agreement also established the timetable for producing a report on decommissioning and moving towards all-party talks by mid-February.

Mr Major is convinced that elections to a body, which would do nothing more than appoint negotiating teams to the all-party talks, would help to break the impasse in the peace process. But the nationalists suspect it is a device to produce what has always been the Ulster Unionists' agenda: an

internal settlement based on a power-sharing assembly directly elected in Ulster.

If these fears can be overcome, elections could take place by the summer. But if the nationalists refuse to endorse the elections, no amount of pressure from the Ulster Unionists on Mr Major will make them work.

On arms decommissioning, the Ulster Unionists believe Mr Major to be a man of his word and privately do not think he will give way. Mr Major puts it more prosaically. There is no point compromising on the decommissioning issue, because the Ulster Unionists would not sit down at the negotiating table unless the IRA had made some progress on getting rid of its arms, he says. The Mitchell commission is due to report in mid-January, a deadline that MPs believe is hopelessly optimistic and will have to be extended.

Time is not on Mr Major's side. He does, of course, have another option: to resist any deal-making and instead tell the Ulster Unionists bluntly that if they wish to pull down the whole house of cards and elect a Labour government, they can do so. That is Mr Major's trump card, and it may come in handy in the agonising months that lie ahead.

Internet police are reading you

Demands to censor cyberspace porn may be less attractive than they seem, says Andrew Brown

It looks as if 1996 is going to be the year cyberspace is brought down to earth. From Munich to Washington, and from Peking to Columbus, Ohio, policemen and politicians have recently been trying to censor the Internet – or those parts of it that they can control. Because the Internet is global, censorship has until now applied the standards of the least restrictive user, which means the standards prevalent in American universities where almost anything goes under the banner of free speech.

Two developments threaten to replace this regime with its opposite: a censorship that would be so broad as to incorporate all of the taboos in any country on the Net.

The first development was the decision in December by CompuServe, one of the large American commercial networks through which users can exchange information and opinions, to cut off its customers' access to more than 200 "newsgroups" or conversation areas on the wider Internet. It did this after pressure from the police in Bavaria, who are investigating pornography on the Internet, which breaches German law.

CompuServe has bowed to German pressure before: it refused some years ago to carry a popular game that involved shooting Nazis in a castle because the swastikas on the baddies' uniforms were illegal to display under German law. But their action was hardly noticed at the time.

This time the business is much bigger and there are more customers to antagonise on both sides of the debate. CompuServe claims 500,000 customers in Europe, of whom about 200,000 are in Germany. Most of the newsgroups it has cut off are pornographic; many are probably already illegal to access in this country. "All.sex.bestiality", for example, contains fairly detailed instructions on how to have intercourse with dogs.

Others among the banned groups are just student jokes: "alt.sex.bestiality.barney" proposes to visit indignities on a purple dinosaur who has a children's programme on American TV, and it is difficult to take wholly seriously the threat to morals represented by "alt.sex.bestiality.hamster.duct-tape".

Others among the censored newsgroups consist of genuinely adult discussions of sexuality, and three of them consist of legally reproduced reports from news agencies. Meanwhile, the German authorities did not ask CompuServe to cut off access to some newsgroups whose subjects also violate German law, notably "alt.revisionism", a discussion group devoted to wrangling about whether the Holocaust ever happened. CompuServe's action affects all its four million customers worldwide, since it is apparently impossible for the company to cut off access only to its German customers.

The second development in cyberspace censorship is even more sweeping. This comes from Washington, where Christian right-wingers managed to insert a clause in the recently passed Telecommunications Bill to make it illegal to publish indecent material over the computer networks. Although the wording of the Bill is still being disputed, it seems certain that "indecent", rather than the narrower standard of "obscenity", will apply.

After successfully lobbying Congress, the networks themselves, such as CompuServe or

Information moves around the Internet in quantities too great to monitor

its rival America Online, will not be held legally responsible for any material being passed across them. But "publishers" – and that means anyone with access to a computer and a modem – might be liable to fines of up to \$100,000 and two years in jail for using naughty words.

American libertarians are confident that the new measures will prove unconstitutional; but the existence of a global network on which almost anyone can publish almost anything does raise some strange issues. Traditional censorship has relied on controlling the distribution of a physical product – books or pamphlets. But information travels around the Internet in quantities too great to monitor, and once released seeps everywhere. Even today it is easy for the technically savvy and determined to access banned groups through CompuServe.

In cyberspace, censorship depends on controlling the production of material, not its distribution. Unless, of course, the distributing networks end up few enough and large enough to become vulnerable to consumer, political and legal pressure. In the age of Murdoch, who would bet against that outcome?

Blame it all on the Beatles

The tide of global pop culture sparked by the lovable Fab Four has caused a crazy French backlash

Twenty-five years ago the Beatles broke up – and "yesterday" – to quote Paul McCartney – the French government imposed a quota on the amount of radio airtime allowed to foreign pop. France's radio stations must now ensure that 40 per cent of their pop output is French, a draconian, not to say sadistic measure in view of the fact that 100 per cent of French pop is awful. Johnny Halliday was about the best they could do and the superb Jacques Brel, before you write in, was Belgian and anyway not, strictly speaking, pop.

"The law was made," said an apologist for this latest gloriously doomed attempt at cultural protectionism, "to defend French culture and economic activity. If we're taken over by American music, we won't be economically viable any more." One could argue with this last point – most of the world has been taken over by American music and some of it remains economically



BRYAN APPELYARD

viable – but one sees what she means. I and many others stopped being economically viable for several months after hearing the Grateful Dead's *American Beauty*, and whole industrial sectors must have been wiped out by Lou Reed's *absent-minded giggle* on "Sister Ray". American music does have this awkward habit of disabbling the consciousness of vulnerable types who might otherwise be productively employed.

But, of course, the point the French are really making is the serious one that local cultures are in danger of being swamped by globalisation. They made the same point about films – during the Gatt negotiations they fought off Schwarzenegger to protect *Dépardieu*. Since the latter is arguably the greatest screen actor alive, they had a considerably stronger case about movies than they do about pop. But the point was the same: how can medium-sized countries with medium-sized home markets hope to compete culturally with big countries with big home markets? How, in particular, can non-English speaking countries compete in fields – such as film and pop – in which an effectively global language provides a built-in commercial advantage?

The obvious point to make here is that rock 'n' roll, whether the French like it or not, is an Anglo-American monopoly. Abba, Björk and other Nordic aberrations notwithstanding, only the British and the Americans really know how to do pop. For the French to protect pop as local culture is, on the face of it, just silly – we could respond by giving heritage grants to British croissant makers.

But I suspect there is a deeper aspect to this cultural paranoia. With their radio quotas the French are not really trying to nurture the delicate creative blooms of Johnny Halliday and his progeny. Rather, they suspect that pop groups are, in fact, the shock troops of globalisation. It's not the pop they are worrying about so much as what comes after. Pop seeps across frontiers, softening up the young and paving the way for Levis, Coca-Cola and Microsoft. Pop subverts nationality by imposing a single rock 'n' roll aspiration and, overwhelmingly, that aspiration can only be expressed by American products. Bon



All you need is love? And a little home-produced music, say the French

Jovi and Michael Jackson are corporate ads for corporate America.

Which brings me back to the Beatles. A quarter of a century on, their celebratory resurrection on television and CD has been remarkable – hype maybe, but good hype. Teenagers love them all over again. A new wave of British bands acknowledge them as the true precursors. John, ageless, frail, disembodied, returns from the dead to join his wizened pals in the charts. From millions of pairs of 40-plus eyes, hot tears spurt at the sound

of "Here Comes the Sun" or "Let it Be". In the ITV series *The Beatles Anthology*, which ended on Sunday, Andringco, as he was always known, re-emerged as the flat voice of common sense and group stability while Paul returned as the arrogant, demanding force that detonated the band from within. It all seems like "yesterday".

What this has all made clear, with the wisdom of hindsight, is that the Beatles were the first. This was the Ur-band, the original. They were not, of course, the first pop stars. Elvis and Cliff

came long before. But they were the first to define the global role of pop. They took the forms of American music, improvising and softening, and then they resold them, first to the British, then to the States and then to the world.

Before the Beatles no group, no individual was so intimately and globally known. Elvis was big, of course, but he remained part of a recognisable American star system. What newness and rawness he had was carefully removed to leave only a fat but empty Las Vegas floorshow, yet another bombed-out freak to join the huge pile of human wreckage spewed out by the American entertainment industry.

But the Beatles, in everything they did, asserted the freshness and transnational appeal of pop. They were not – not obviously at least – part of some old marketing system. They seemed to say and do what they liked. Their amiable jokes and gentle put-downs were noted and trea-

The Beatles were among the leading precursors of that terrifying phenomenon, globalisation

sured. And, looking back at that footage, they were weirdly, improbably nice. Their work was nice – as Paul pointed out, they only ever said that all you need is love, without attempting to rip up families, distort psyches or detonate society – and their personalities were nice – even John at his most acid never approached the spurs of demonic violence of Bob Dylan or Lou Reed. They were good, sharp, unpredictable but essentially unobjectionable.

As a result they crossed frontiers effortlessly. Even the Japanese young could buy this smiling assertion of teenage autonomy, of soft-hearted dissent. The crowds lined the airport viewing terraces and screamed. The Beatles laid the international hippie and tourist trail that guided the wanderings of late Sixties youth. By 1969 you could exchange greetings in English pop lyrics in almost any city in the world.

But, of course, those were relatively innocent times and the Beatles were English. They and Swinging London may have boosted tourism and guaranteed the future of the pop industry, but BP and ICI didn't flog oil or chemicals to the world on the back of their success. We invented the form of the globalised culture but, typically, we didn't exploit it.

Instead, global pop returned to its American roots. The jeans and the soft drinks followed the bands. And later, as the fans grew up, the corporate culture was taken over by the Woodstock generation. Now almost everything American, from jeans to boots to software, is sold with either an explicit or implicit appeal to the authenticity of rock 'n' roll culture. As a final, if subtle, insult, Microsoft now uses "Start It Up" by the Rolling Stones, the English band that most slavishly aped American authenticity, to sell Windows 95.

So the truth is that, nice as they might have been, achingly sweet as their songs may now sound, the Beatles were among the leading precursors of that terrifying, culture-incinerating phenomenon known as globalisation. It was not their fault. They did nothing wrong. They only said: "All you need is love". Twenty-five years later the French, with their silly gesture, signal the sombre truth: we need much, much more.

ANOTHER VIEW David Watson

It's not the slow coaches that are the danger

The Transport Minister Steven Norris claims that his ban on coaches using the third lane of motorways, effective as from yesterday, will make travel safer. He says because coaches now have to have speed limiters holding them down to a maximum of 65mph, it is "inconsistent" for them to use a lane where other vehicles can travel at 70mph.

Does this mean there are different speed limits in different lanes on motorways, and that we cannot do 70mph in the middle lane but only 65mph? No, of course not, but that is how it comes across. The minister, his advisers and all motorway drivers

should commit the following rubric to heart: "There is no fast lane; there is no slow lane; there is no cruising lane. All lanes are equal."

In any event, the Department of Transport's own statistics in pre-speed limiter days put coaches well down the league table of speed sinners. Even the AA emphasises this. And in the era of mechanical limiters it is only possible for coaches to break the limit by tampering with the device – rightly a criminal offence.

If it is not speed, is safety the problem? Hardly, because the minister himself regularly points out, using his own department's statistics, coach

passengers are eight times safer than car passengers. So what is this ban on coaches in the third lane really about? Can it be the car-owning electorate that is at the bottom of it? The AA says some of its members "often feel pushed around by coaches". Can the Government really be implementing this ban simply because of feelings – in the face of facts?

When the Confederation of Passenger Transport was consulted on the proposal for the ban, we said we would commission independent research and would submit the report to the minister. The independent research said there were no safety

grounds for a ban but, on the contrary, "if such a ban were introduced, there could be more severe accidents because they would involve heavy goods vehicles, not cars".

The report also dealt with the economic effects on tourism and the detrimental effects on environmental pollution. The Confederation, however, rests its case on safety.

I would strongly advise the minister to use his usual excellent Liverpoolian commonsense to address the real motorway safety hazard: the middle-lane hog, the driver who sits tight at his (and it is invariably a man) complacent, law-abiding 70mph in the

"cruising" lane, as he sees it, with never a glance in his rear-view mirror at the rapidly building tailback his selfishness is causing.

Perhaps Mr Norris could work with the motoring associations and driving schools to raise motorway car driving standards, concentrating on lane manners and lane discipline. This ban does not simply penalise coaches, it endangers everyone. It has handed the third lane to the boy racers and speed freaks who will turn it into a restriction-free speed trap.

The writer is director of public affairs, Confederation of Passenger Transport UK

Find out who showed their form last night.

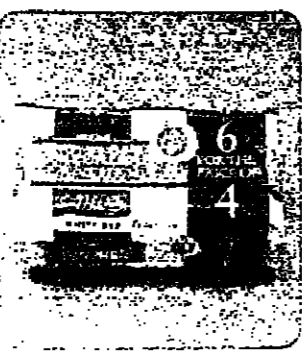
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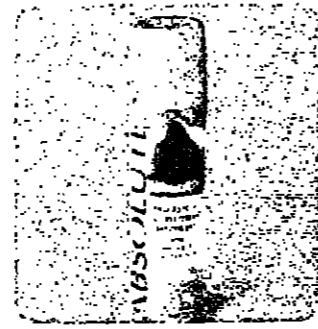


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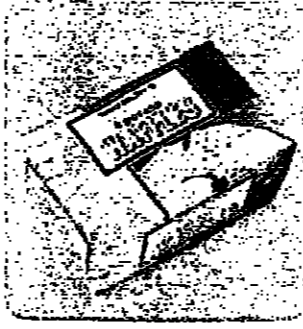
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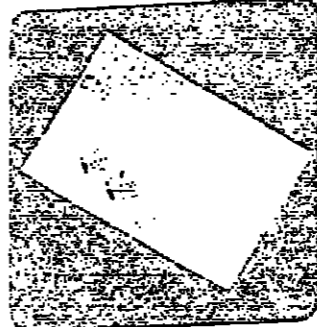
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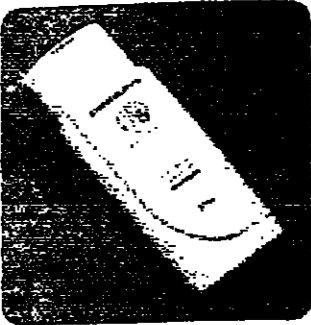


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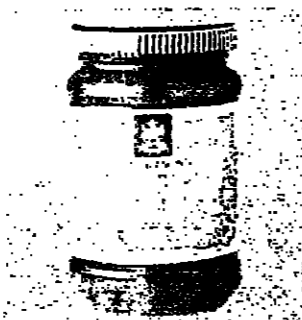
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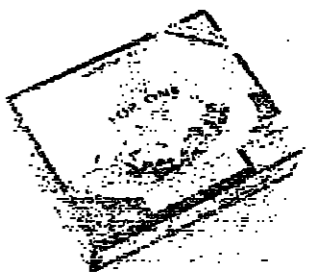
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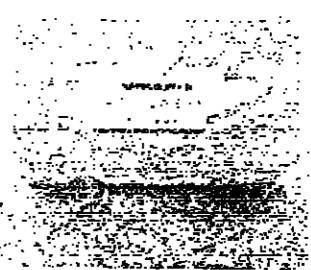
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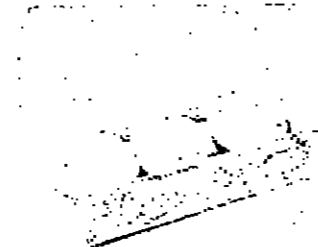
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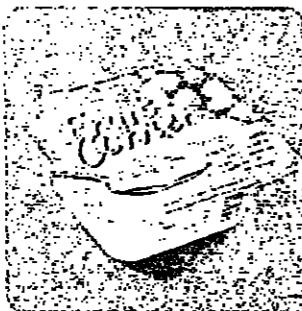


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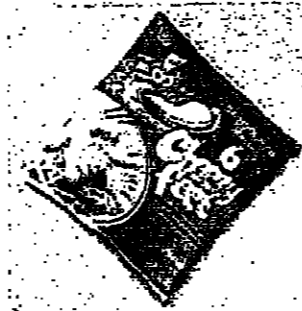


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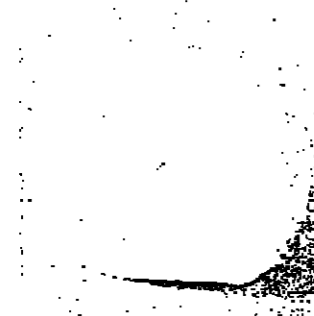
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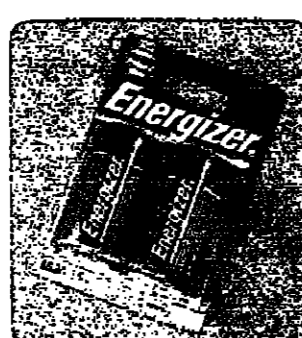


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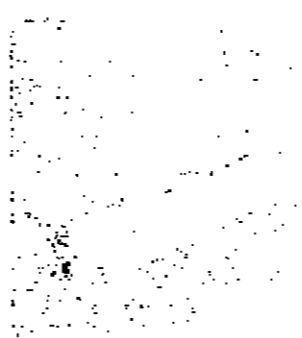


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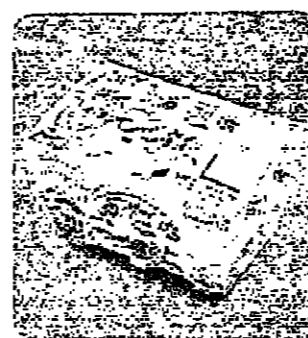
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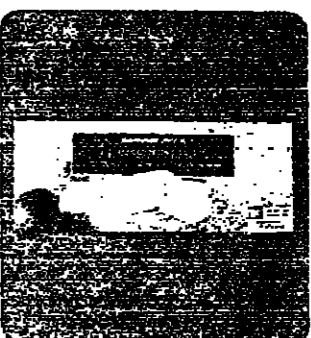
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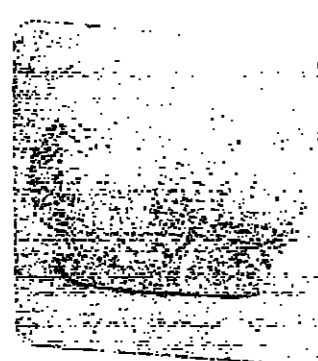
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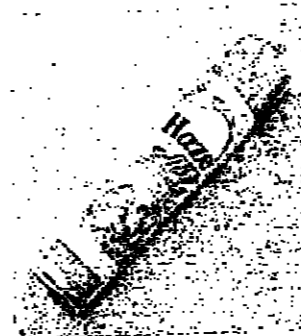
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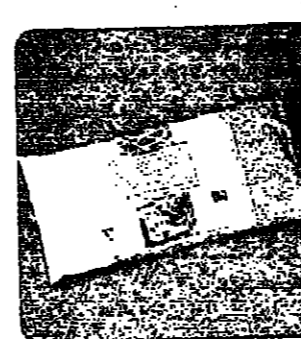
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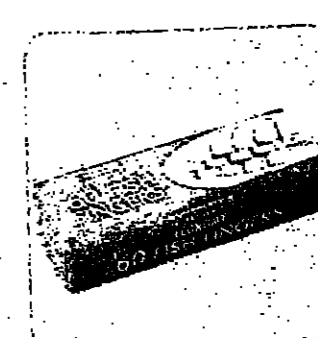
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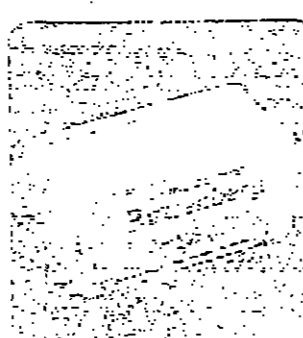
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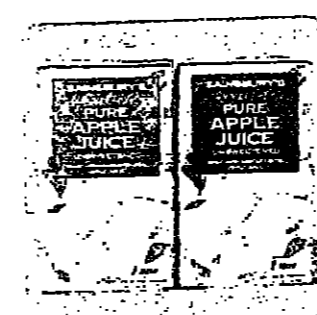
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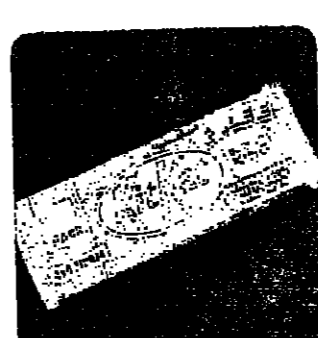
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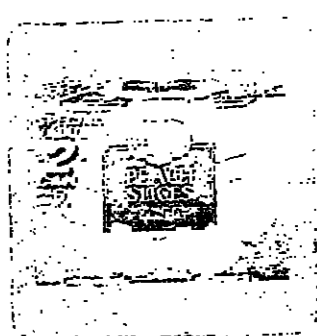


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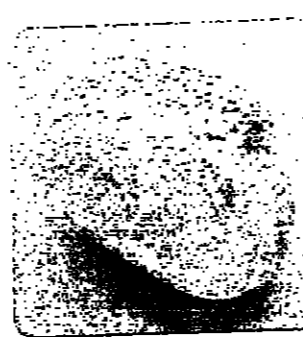
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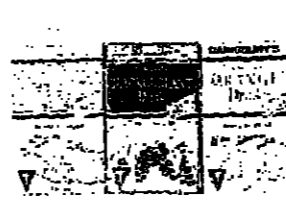
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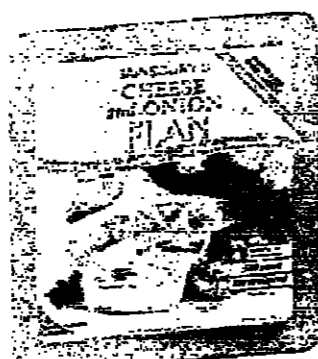


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obituaries/gazette

Heiner Müller

Heiner Müller was the greatest modern German dramatist since Brecht. His influence on the German and continental theatre scene was immense, and in Europe (outside England) he was one of the most performed contemporary playwrights. His language has great range, from a tough, lucid prose to muscular blank verse. A poet as well as a playwright, he ranks not just with Brecht, but with Goethe.

His challenging and often controversial plays were close to the pulse of history and contemporary politics. His political honesty brought him enemies as well as friends. A citizen of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), he encountered difficulties throughout his career, and faced official persecution. He refused to move to the West when that would have been possible. To the end he believed in the possibility of an alterable and better world, and refused to countenance the death of utopias despite the demolition of East European socialism.

As a German writer he is in danger of being seen as merely intellectual, but his plays have produced visually exciting theatre of great physicality—often their sheer sexual energy strike one as much as their politics. If he is influenced by Brecht, he is too by Antonin Artaud, the French visionary of the "Theatre of Cruelty".

His aesthetic face belied a love of the earthy, good things of life, in particular whisky and the eternal cigar (a German television portrait of him was aptly entitled "Apocalypse with Cigar"). He could be abrasive,

but only out of his total sense of honesty (and his love of debate), and he was always soft-spoken. "The truth, softly but unapologetically," he often quoted. He was a loyal friend, and I enjoyed the jousts of argument. Müller was born in Saxony in 1929. After the Second World War he quickly proved one of the most talented theatre writers in the new GDR. Initially very much a Brecht pupil, his early plays, like *Die Korrektur* ("The Correction") and *Der Landfriede* ("The Land Peace"), performed at the Berliner Ensemble, are in the social realist mode, and use elements of Brecht's dramaturgy. Müller deals with the reality of building socialism in East Germany and, though he was supportive of the socialist idea, his criticisms brought him into conflict with the authorities. He ultimately rejected attempts to censor the plays and force him to rewrite: the result was a complete stop on productions and, in 1961, exclusion from the GDR's Writers' Union.

Only with the success, ironically in the West, of the Munich production of his *Philoketes* (1968) did things begin to improve. This free version of Sophocles, both a tough anti-war piece and a fascinating analysis of the politics of power, led Rüdiger Berghaus, then director of the Berliner Ensemble (now the famous opera director), to intervene with the GDR authorities. After much discussion the Ensemble was finally permitted to produce Müller's epic play *Zemite* ("Cement", 1973). Written in blank verse, this dealt on a Shakespearean scale with the problems facing

the early Russian revolution: economics and questions of power and morality side by side with sexual politics.

The success of *Zemite* led to increasing opportunities, especially in West Germany. *Germania Tod in Berlin* ("Germania Death in Berlin") and *Schlaf Traum Schrei* ("Sleep Dream Scream"), both dealing with recent German history, followed, as well as the first of many Shakespeare adaptations, *Macbeth*. Shakespeare, to Müller, was the great paragon; he obsessed him all his career.

In these works of the Seventies Müller started to hone his technique of "collage", of an almost deliberately fragmentary approach to writing. This can be seen to effect in *Der Aufzug* ("The Task", 1981), one of his masterpieces, which combined elements of the French Revolution and the slave uprisings in the Caribbean with dreamlike sequences of contemporary third world problems. *Quartett* ("Quartet", 1982) continued in this vein: this is Müller's two-handed version of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, earlier and more powerful than Christopher Hampton's adaptation of the same material, which in the rest of Europe met with little success, as theatres preferred Müller's more visionary and experimental approach.

Der Aufzug also became the first of his plays Müller himself was allowed to direct in the West, in Bochum in 1982; thereafter he produced many paradigmatic productions of his own work. From 1985 onwards he wrote a series of connected texts which took their overall title, *Wolokolamsker Chaussee*

("Wolokolamsk Road"), from the westward road from Moscow, where Hitler's troops were finally halted within sight of the Russian capital.

Europe's and Germany's recent history, from the rise of Fascism to the East-West conflict, had been Müller's inspiration. His work is central to any understanding of the events of 1989, but the fall of the Wall ironically also robbed him, for a time, of the basis for his dramatic writing. Instead he turned to essays and interviews, which are among the most lucid comments on the collapse of the GDR and German unification, which, like his Western colleague Günter Grass, he viewed with scepticism.

From 1990 to 1992 he was President of the Academy of Art in Berlin. He published his autobiography *Krieg ohne Schlacht* ("War Without Battle", 1992) and turned to directing. Berlin saw his amazing eight-hour version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and his own collage-like *Die Hamlet-Maschine* ("The Hamlet Machine") in 1991. He was the Bayreuth Festival's unusual choice to direct Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (1993), a cult success. Most recently he had another huge success with a production of Brecht's *Aufbau* at the Berliner Ensemble, whose sole director he had become.

Müller's achievements were recognised with many awards, including Germany's highest literary award, the Büchner Prize, very apt as he shared many qualities with the author of *Woyzeck* and *Danton's Death*. Apart from George Tabori, no other German playwright has



Müller: 'Apocalypse with Cigar'

Photograph: Alistair Miller

had greater impact on recent theatre; to their shame neither the RSC nor National Theatre in England have put on any plays by him, the RSC rather giving a platform to Goethe Strauss, a far lesser figure. But there have been powerful productions on the London fringe, and in 1992 at the Royal Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh. Müller's last two years were marked by illness, though he continued to work. After six years of silence he had almost completed a new play, about Stalin and Hitler, those two figures who loom so darkly over our century, which he had hoped to direct himself in the

New Year—but in the last few months his cancer struck again. Müller had always confronted death with courage, in his life as in his work, as he thought it a central theme no one could avoid who wants to write with truth about our times—especially a German writer, aware of the pain and death the Germans have brought all over the world. "All art, including mine, is a remembrance of the dead," he once said.

Michael Batz

Heiner Müller, playwright, director and poet: born Eppendorf, Saxony 9 January 1929; married; died Berlin 30 December 1995.

Professor Dudley Johnson

Dudley Johnson was a splendid specimen of the larger-than-life Anglophile American academic of yesterday, a breed now almost extinct. With his death the world loses one of the last Grand Old Men of English letters raised in the inter-war years, when the pursuit of scholarship was still regarded as the principal purpose of education.

For well over half a century Johnson's life was inextricably linked with that of Princeton University, first as undergraduate, then instructor in the English Department, assistant professor, Philip Freneau Professor, associate professor, professor, departmental chairman and, finally, Holmes Professor of Belles Lettres. He retired in 1979, but continued to live in Princeton until his death.

Edward Dudley Hume Johnson was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1911, across the street from James Thurber, as he liked to recall. His father, Charles, was a local businessman and gentleman farmer. He attended St Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire, before going up to Princeton, where he entered the Department of Romance Languages with the Class of '34, graduating magna cum laude. Apart from academic distinction, his undergraduate years were memorable for the occasion when, during the dark days of prohibition, the still in his

ly and patrician figure that those of us who got to know him later came to love.

Patrician he certainly was, but he was also the epitome of the absent-minded professor: his regular greeting "How are you, my friend?" frequently disguised the fact that he had temporarily forgotten the names even of those closest to him. My first name is Peyton; many is the time I have had to answer to "Clayton", while on one occasion he is reputed to have given a graduate seminar on Byron calling him Browning throughout. His students knew who he was talking about, and no one wished to interrupt the spellbinding flow of erudition.

Amongst those who gained from his teaching are Robert Patten, the Dickens/Cruikshank scholar, the Russian George Landow, and Samuel Pickering Jr, the real-life model for John Keating in *Dead Poets Society*, who was later to become his son-in-law. Indeed, Keating's exhortation to his pupils, "Learn to savour words and language", is vintage Johnson.

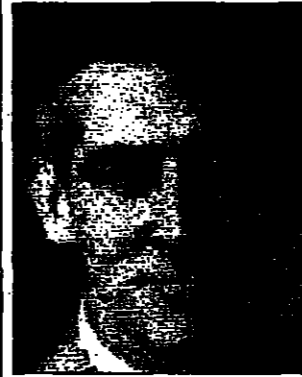
In 1952 Dudley Johnson published *The Alien Vision of Victorian Poetry*, and in the mid-1960s *Charles Dickens: an introduction to the reading of his novels*. These were both important works in the reassessment of Victorian life, art and letters. Two later books resulted from a happy marriage between his passion for 19th-century literature and his extracurricular pursuits: *The Poetry of Earth* (1966), which he edited, reflected his deep love of nature and the countryside, whilst *Painters of the Social Scene in Great Britain from Hogarth to Sickert* (1986) enabled him to explore the relationship between literature and narrative painting over two centuries.

Shortly after this book appeared, I took him out to dinner with a museum curator, who spent much of the evening trying to discover exactly how he defined the word "narrative" in relation to painting. The next day Johnson said that, although he had enjoyed the evening, he felt that his fellow guest was one of those products of the American educational system "who allowed language to get between them and their objective".

We were first put in touch in 1964 by Robert Patten, who had sent him a catalogue of our exhibition of "Early English Watercolours" at the Fine Art Society in London. Dudley and his stylish wife Laurie, a photographer and later owner of a gallery, the Drawing Room in Princeton, were both fun-loving people, and their house was always full of laughter. However, his years as departmental chairman during the Vietnam war and the excesses of the student uprisings took their toll: he aged and became a sadder man. In his final letter to me in November he wrote that his "capacity for forming friendships" had been his life's supreme reward. Typically, these friendships have extended beyond the grave. Even while I was writing this a Christmas gift of claret from Dudley Johnson was delivered. Fully aware that he was unlikely to be alive, he still wished to ensure that his friends would enjoy the festive season and be of good cheer.

Peyton Skipwith

Edward Dudley Hume Johnson, English scholar: born Columbus, Ohio, 29 November 1911; associate professor of English Literature, Princeton University, 1952-61; professor 1961-74; Holmes Professor of Belles Lettres 1974-79 (emeritus); married Marianne MacKie (deceased; marriage dissolved), 1947; Laura Vance (two sons, one daughter); died Princeton, New Jersey 9 December 1995.

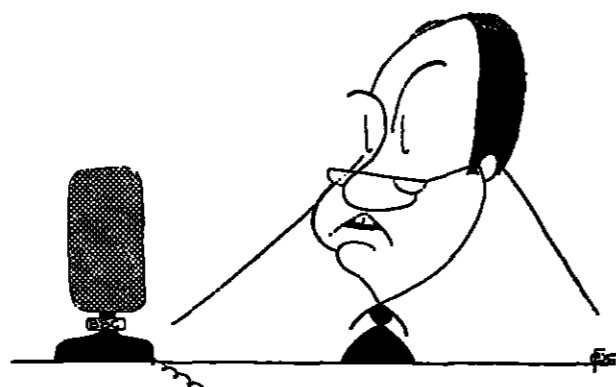


Johnson: patrician

Ian Cotterell

Ian Cotterell's career as a producer of radio drama was an example of how determination, enthusiasm and tenacity can overcome apparent obstacles. At a time when either a formal drama training or a university degree were almost a *sine qua non* for a BBC drama producer he succeeded in making a passionate hobby into a paid job and for 20 years, from 1972 to his retirement, he was an acknowledged and popular professional in his chosen *metier*.

Less excited by novelty of content than by skill of performance, within which field his sensibility was acute, he was most at home with the popular classics of the theatre and dramatisations of the classics of literature. Notable amongst these were his radio productions of *Alice in Wonderland* (1977), and *Alice Through the Looking Glass* (1985) in association with the composer Carl Davis. Here his passion for music (he was both an opera and a ballet buff as well as a theatre buff), his



An amateur in the proper sense: Cotterell, drawn by Clive Francis

child-like sense of fun, his knowledge of technology and his enthusiasm for performance all allied to create prize-winning works of sheer delight.

Cotterell joined the BBC as a filing clerk in 1951, having left school at the age of 16, and having spent five years working in a humble capacity for the publicity section of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Hard study and application resulted in his becoming a studio manager at the BBC and then, in 1960, a Programme Assistant with the BBC's Overseas Transcription Service. Here he was responsible for the selection and preparation of drama and features radio programmes to be made available for transmission by foreign broadcasting organisations free of charge.

The 12 years he spent doing this developed his knowledge, judgement and technical authority. More importantly he applied himself to drama direction in the amateur world. He worked assiduously with the BBC's amateur theatrical group and with SADG (Studio Managers Amateur Dramatic Group). For this, under the guidance of the doyen director Raymond Raikes, he experimented with stereophony in its early phases and with quadraphony and surround-sound, experiments which were to continue long after he had "turned professional".

He also directed for the Croydon Historical Society and was responsible for a number of ambitious Shakespeare productions at the Ashcroft Theatre in Croydon. His extramural association with these amateur groups continued throughout his life.

He was, indeed, an amateur in the most proper sense in that he loved what he did and one sensed that he would happily

have worked for no reward could he have afforded to do so or even been permitted to do so. This love of drama and his enthusiasm for it communicated itself to all the actors, writers and technicians with whom he worked.

Ian Cotterell was not an interventionist director but one who provided the right ingredients and created the right atmosphere for it all to happen. He enjoyed working with stars and recognised that these had achieved their status through talent rather than by accident. Perhaps his early days with MGM also made him aware that there were certain publicity advantages to be derived from star casting. One reviewer wrote of him: "Mr Cotterell's casting is worthy of the more glamorous days of H.M. Tennent."

Nowhere was this more in evidence than in the three series of 21 original short radio plays by Peter Barnes entitled *Barnes People* which were broadcast in

the early Eighties, where the cast lists read like something out of the pages of *Who's Who in the Theatre*, including such names as Laurence Olivier, Paul Scofield, Peggy Ashcroft, Sean Connery, John Hurt, Robert Stephens, Judi Dench, Donald Pleasence, Peter Ustinov, Irene Worth and John Gielgud.

Despite the restrictions of Parkinson's disease which beset him over the past five years, this easy, popular and likeable man retained his sense of fun, his enthusiasm and his passionate private interests. It has been to radio listeners' benefit that he chose to put these personal qualities to public advantage.

John Tyldeman

Ian Cotterell, radio producer: born 5 March 1930; MGM publicity department 1946-51; clerk/studio manager, BBC Radio 1951-60, programme assistant, Transcription Service 1960-72, Producer, BBC Radio Drama 1972-92; died London 11 December 1995.

Curly Fox

Scholars tend to divide country music fiddle-playing into two broadly geographical camps: the first, now dominant Texas style, is characterised by long smooth bow strokes that allow for improvisational embellishment. The second, more traditional style emerged from the Appalachian foothills in the 19th century and with its sawstroke bowing, is typically faster and more rhythmic. Armin LeRoy "Curly" Fox was among its finest exponents.

The fiddle has been a dominant feature of the country music landscape since the champion fiddlers Eck Robertson and Henry Gilliland arrived, wearing Confederate Army uniforms, at the Victor studio in

New York City in June 1922 and demanded that they be allowed to cut what are usually acknowledged as the first commercial country recordings.

A one-time star of the WSM *Grand Ole Opry*, the longest-running country music radio programme, broadcast live from Nashville, Fox routinely stopped the show with his trick fiddling: numbers such as "Johnny's Old Grey Mule" and "Black Mountain Rag" providing ideal vehicles for his hillbilly pyrotechnics.

Fortunately, he committed some of these performances to wax. His 1935 version of Septimus Winner's "Listen to the Mockingbird", cut for Decca, with Joe Atlesley on guitar, with

its imitative trills and whoops, and despite an occasionally harsh tone, remains a classic of the genre.

As was so often the case, Fox had been taught to play by his father. At the age of 13 he joined a travelling medicine show, and made his first records with the now-forgotten Roane County Ramblers in 1929. By 1932 he was leading his own string band, the Atlanta-based Tennessee Firecrackers.

In 1937, and by that time an *Opry* regular, Fox teamed with his future wife Ruby Owens, known on stage as Texas Ruby. The sister of Tex Owens, the writer of *Cattle Call*, the deep-voiced Texas Ruby had arrived in Nashville with Zeke Clem-

ents' Broncho Busters in 1934. She and Curly Fox married in 1939 and for over two decades were amongst the most popular husband-and-wife teams in the business.

In the years immediately following the end of the Second World War they made a series of classic recordings for Columbia Records, with Ruby's throaty vocals fronting a tight band that boasted some extraordinary twin-guitar work from Grady Martin and Jabbo Aronson. Among the highlights was Fred Rose's "Don't Let That Man Get You Down".

During the Fifties they relocated to Houston for seven years before returning to Nashville at the end of the

decade and recording an album for Starday.

On the evening of 29 March 1963, Curly returned from an *Opry* performance to discover that the house trailer that he and Ruby shared had been engulfed in flames and that his wife had perished. Nashville must have seemed fated that month, four of its most popular stars having also recently died in tragic circumstances: Patsy Cline, Cowboy Copas and Hawkshaw Hawkins in a plane crash, and Jack Anglin in an automobile accident en route to their memorial service.

After that Curly Fox went into semi-retirement in rural Illinois, appearing only sporadically at Bluegrass and Old-



Fox: Grand Ole Opry

Timey festivals, where he continued to delight audiences.

Paul Wadey

Armin LeRoy "Curly" Fox, fiddler: born Graysville, Tennessee 9 November 1910; married 1939 Ruby Owens (died 1963); died 10 November 1995.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

MOORE: Alexander Nicholas (5th Nov), first child born to Dr David and Natalie Moore, at 23.45 on 30 December 1995, at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, funerals, forthcoming marriages, Marriages) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Guard at Horse Guards, 1 Jan. 7 Company Coldstream Guards mount the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards.

Birthdays

Mr David Bailey, photographer and film director, 56; Sir Richard Boyles, former Physician to the Queen, 79; Mr Leopold Brook, former chairman, Simon Engineering, 84; Mr Christopher Campbell, Chairman, British Shipbuilders, 86; Admiral William J. Crowe, US ambassador, 71; The Duke of Devonshire, former Chancellor of Manchester University, 76; Professor Sir Kingsley Dunham, former Director, Institute of Geological Sciences, 86; Mr David Graveney, cricketer, 82; Mr Walter Harrison, former MP, 75; Mr Piers Merchant MP, 45; Sir Bruce Pattison, governor of the Bank of Scotland, 58; Sir Charles Reece, former research and technology director, ICI, 69; Mr Edmund de Rothschild, director, N.M. Rothschild and Sons, 58; Air Marshal Sir Ernest Suley, 83; Professor John Thomas, chemist, 70; Sir Keith Thomas, President, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 63; Sir Michael Tippett, composer, 91; Dame Rachel Waterhouse, former chairman, Consumers' Association, 73; Mr Robert Wilton, chairman, Wilton Enterprises Ltd, 51; The Right Rev Kenneth Woolcombe, Assistant Bishop of Worcester, 72.

Anniversaries

Births: Nathaniel Bacon, American colonial leader, 1647; John Manners, Marquis of Granby, military commander, 1721; Oswald Achenbach, landscape painter, 1827; Jimmy Nes-

vo (James Holloway), comedian, 1897; Isaac Asimov, biochemist and science-fiction writer, 1920; Denton Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso), Roman poet, 17; Alexander Wedderburn, 1st Earl of Rosslyn, Lord Chancellor, 1805; Alexander William Kinglake, author, 1891; Sir George Biddell Airy, astronomer royal, 1892; Sir Edward Augustus Bond, librarian of the British Museum, 1898; Carl Goldmark, composer, 1915; Dick Emery, comedian, 1983. On this day the Académie Française was established by Cardinal Richelieu, 1635; Georgia became the fourth of the United States, 1788; the first municipal crematorium was opened at Holf, 1901; the present building of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, London, opened, 1905; copper-nickel coins were issued in the United Kingdom to replace silver, 1947; 66 people died after a barrier collapsed at Bronx Park football ground, Glasgow, 1971. Today is the Feast Day of St Adalhard or Adeland, St Basil, St Caspar del Bufalo, St Gregory Nazianzen, St Macarius of Alexandria, St Manicha, St Seraphim of Sarov, St Vincentian and The Holy Name of Jesus.

Lectures

National Gallery: Colin Wiggins, "Drawings" (J); Michelangelo the Draughtsman", 1pm. British Museum: George Hart, "Ancient Egyptian Religion: myths of creation", 1.15pm.

No damages award for loss of moonlighting earnings

LAW REPORT

2 January 1996

Hunter v Butler, Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Waite and Lord Justice Hobhouse); 19 December 1995

A widow could not claim, as damages for loss of dependency under the Fatal Accidents Act 1976, sums her deceased husband would have earned by "moonlighting", which he would not have declared lest they affect his entitlement to social security benefits.

The Court of Appeal upheld the decision on this point by District Judge Moon, sitting in Torquay District Registry on 25 November 1993, but allowed the appeal of the plaintiff, Maria Hunter, suing as the widow and administratrix of her husband, Kenneth Hunter, against the judge's refusal to make an award of damages for loss of dependency in respect of the prospects of her husband, who was unemployed at the time of his death, later obtaining full-time employment.

To take account of this, the appeal court added £12,480 to the total of £6,575 plus inter-

est awarded by the judge for bereavement, funeral expenses and general damages, in respect of a fatal road accident, on 9 December 1983, for which the defendant accepted liability.

Michael de Navarro QC and James Haywood (Hyde Mahon Bridges, for Lee-Barber Goodrich & Co, Torquay) for the plaintiff; William Stevenson (Beauchcroft Stanleys, for Carr & Hallett, Exeter) for the defendant.

Lord Justice Waite said the deceased was 41 at the time of his death, leaving a widow then aged 36 and six children. He had always supplemented his earnings by doing odd jobs at evenings and weekends, and from July 1983 until his death he had been working part-time, earning some £90 a week, as a kitchen porter and hotel gardener. He did not disclose those earnings to the social security authorities, from whom he drew full supplementary, family allowance and housing

benefits on the basis that he was unemployed. Had he disclosed his earnings, the benefits would have been reduced accordingly.

The judge held that, had he lived, the deceased would have had no prospects of permanent employment, because none existed. The defendant, seeking to uphold that decision, argued that the deceased fell squarely into the "poverty trap": no wage he could earn from any full-time work he could get would match, after deductions, the sum he and his dependants were already receiving from social security.

In his Lordship's judgment, the conclusion that there was no prospect of the deceased obtaining full-time employment could not be sustained on the evidence of his own employment history and statistical evidence as to subsequent demand for labour in the area. Applying a multiplier of 12

to an annual multiplicand of £4,160, and adopting a dependency percentage of 75 per cent and an "abatement" percentage of 33.3 per cent to reflect the element of chance, his Lordship calculated the deceased's "lost chance" as worth £12,480 to his dependants.

His Lordship rejected the widow's claim to have lost the deceased's supplementary benefit entitlement as a result of his death. In respect of such benefit, she was in no sense dependent on the deceased: she, no less than he, was in that regard dependent upon the state.

As to the question of "moonlighting", it was argued that to the extent that the deceased would not have been in full-time employment (as reflected in the abatement of the award of lost chance damages) he would have supplemented his income from undeclared part-time work, the proceeds of

should be treated as forming part of the dependency lost by his widow.

His Lordship would reject that argument on two grounds. First, it read too much into the process of abatement in calculating the lost chance of full-time earnings. The abatement was solely to reflect the exigencies of chance, and it was over-sophisticated to introduce into the calculation some notional apportionment between weeks worked for a declared wage and weeks supported by supplementary benefit and undeclared part-time earnings.

Second, it offended public policy in two respects: (a) by assuming that someone who committed fraud in the past would continue to do so, ignoring the possibilities of repentance or detection; and (b) by treating the proceeds of illegally concealed earnings as providing a valid head of recovery by way of damages for loss or injury.

Lord Justice Hobhouse and Lord Justice Hirst concurred.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

0971 201050

business

TODAY

Companies

A quiet week on the corporate front as the City drifts back to work after the Christmas and New Year break. Only a handful of smaller companies are reporting and no results are scheduled today. However, retailers should start to release their Christmas trading statements this week with additional updates on how the first few days of their winter sales

are progressing. Shares in some stores groups, such as Dixons and Marks & Spencer, have already risen on the back of good Christmas sales. Goldsmiths, the jewellery retailer, has already announced strong sales increases for the run-up to Christmas.

EGMs: Ransomes, the lawnmowers group, holds its emergency general meeting to approve its £37m rights issue. The issue of 81 million shares priced at 48p is to reduce borrowings and

catch up on preference dividend payments. Gearing should fall from 400 per cent to around 60 per cent. This should enable the company to invest more in the business.

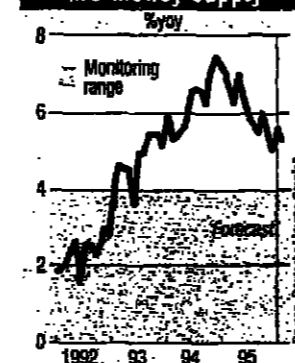
Economics

Provisional December figures are due today for M0, the narrow measure of money supply that consists chiefly of notes and coins in circulation. Despite the fluctuations in M0 growth, the underlying growth rate has been stable at around 5.7 per cent in recent months. This is expected to have continued in December with the weekly notes data remaining robust. Analysts are forecasting a 0.6 per cent rise in M0 in December, lowering the annual rate to 5.2 per cent.

House prices will also be the focus of attention this week, with November figures from Nationwide's House Price Index due today and Halifax fig-

THE WEEK AHEAD

M0 money supply



ures tomorrow. The figures will be watched with interest by housing analysts following predictions by both Halifax and Nationwide of a 2 to 3 per cent increase in house prices over the next 12 months. In the last quarter of 1995 both societies' figures have shown slight increases, leading most experts to predict an end to the downturn that gripped the market for most of 1995.

December figures from the Purchasing Managers Index are forecast to follow a subdued trend. The overall index last month fell to its lowest since November 1992. Both orders received and purchases made are suffering from excess stock levels. This should be reflected in the December survey. The output index, which has risen recently, may fall in December as demand is met by the run-down in stocks. The easing in supply constraints allowed the prices to fall below 50 last month for the first time in more than three years. Prices may rise marginally in December, reflecting the recent decline in sterling and higher commodity prices. However, the underlying trend remains subdued.

Other economics
Big British banking groups' mortgage lending (Nov). UK official reserves (Dec).

TOMORROW

Companies

Interims: None scheduled.
Finals: Thrombom Preferred Income Trust.
EGMs: Devro Int, MEPC.

Economics

The second house market indicator of the week is due with

December figures from the Halifax Price Index. This has shown an increase for four successive months, one of several tentative signs that the housing market is starting to recover.

The Halifax index is expected to rise again in December. Deutsche Morgan Grenfell is forecasting a 2.5 per cent rise in prices next year. No significant change is expected in the level of official reserves, with the release of December figures today. Al-

though sterling fell quite heavily in November, there was only a modest decline in underlying reserves.

THURSDAY

Companies

Interims: Abbey, Druck Holdings.
Finals: Warner Estates Holdings.
EGMs: Courat Riblat, Estates & Agency.
EGMs: Minnet, ML Holdings.

Economics

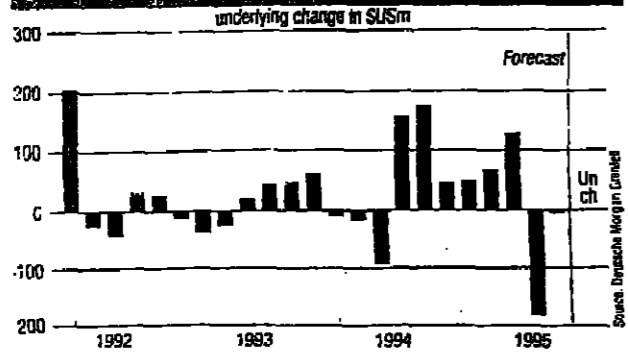
New vehicle registrations (November).

FRIDAY

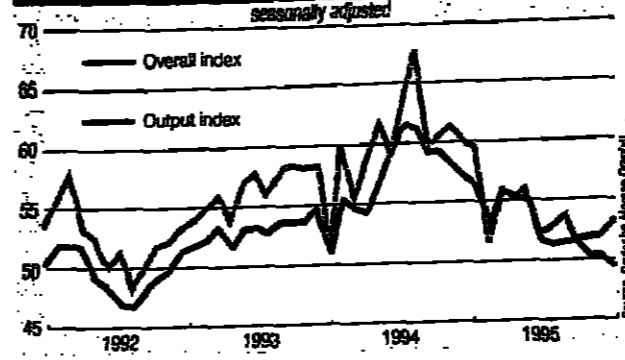
Companies

AGMs: Diploma, GET Group, MMT Computing.
EGMs: Brochampton Holdings, China & Eastern Inv.
Research: by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell

Official reserves



Purchasing managers' index



Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details of the rights & dividends to be paid to all United Securities Market & Suspended on Parly Paid on Nil Paid Shares.

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Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of the Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, please call 0800 123 555.

For assistance, call our helpline 017 674 4375 (9.30am - 5.30pm).

Call cost 30p per minute (excl. VAT) and all of other charges. Call charges include VAT.

Interest Rates

	UK	Germany	US	Japan
Bank	6.50%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Discount	4.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Prime	7.75%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
10-Day Repo	6.12%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
3-Month Repo	5.00%	4.25%	4.25%	4.25%

Oil Exploration

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Oil Integrated

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Other Financial

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Other Services

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Pharmaceuticals

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Life Assurance

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Printing & Paper

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Media

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Property

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Sports, Wines & Ciders

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Support Services

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Water

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Merchant

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Retail

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Wholesale

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, International

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Foreign

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Local

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Regional

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Global

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Multi-National

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, International

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
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Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Foreign

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Local

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Regional

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Global

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
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Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Multi-National

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
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Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

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Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Global

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
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Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Multi-National

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
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Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, International

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	12.50	0.50	10.0
Shell	15.00	0.75	12.0
Esso	18.00	1.00	15.0
Agip	20.00	1.25	18.0

Banks, Foreign

Company	Share Price	Dividend	P/E
BP	150	10	15

GERALD HOLTHAM

The looming Euro crisis and how to defuse it

European politicians have been intoning for so long that widening and deepening are not contradictory that they forgot it was nonsense. Of course it is. Only the British government acknowledged that clearly.

John Major is perfectly right. There, I knew that would get your attention. Britain's much-pummeled Prime Minister was once again on the wrong end of a mauling in Madrid. He raised issues created by the highly probable two-tier European monetary system. All he got for his pains was to be called a "pessimist" by Helmut Kohl. Yet the concerns he expressed were real and justified. Indeed, assorted politicians and Eurocrats acknowledged as much in private.

The reason that he still got short shrift was twofold. First, his motives are suspect: warnings from a friend are one thing; the nit-pickings of an opponent are another. Second, as someone said, "the trouble is that he isn't offering any solutions".

Of course, poor Mr Major cannot offer solutions. He has to keep the warring wings of the Tory party in suspended animation. Any particular solution is likely to trigger an uproar from someone. We can do better, however. Let's look at the problems that Mr Major correctly foresees and see whether any solutions suggest themselves.

The European Union and its plans for monetary union are drifting into an acknowledged crisis. The original Maastricht Treaty was insisted that the Union had to move in a convoy to monetary union. This plan has foundered and is giving way to a "variable geometry" or "a la carte" Europe with different states in and out of various circles of co-operation, including monetary union.

The original conception of Maastricht foundered on two rocks. One was the barely-suppressed hysteria of the German public at giving up the mark, the symbol of their post-war economic miracle. In an effort to assuage these feelings, German politicians have been insisting on tighter and tighter interpretation of the so-called convergence conditions for a country to take part in EMU.

The idea is that only states in very good

order need apply because this new money has to be firmer than the mark. The conditions are now in a fair way to exclude all but a handful of countries.

The second rock was Germany's insistence (backed up by Britain in the role of trouble-maker) on admitting more countries from eastern Europe. Since those countries had no chance of qualifying for Maastricht, on any interpretation, the essential unity of the EU was sure to be lost.

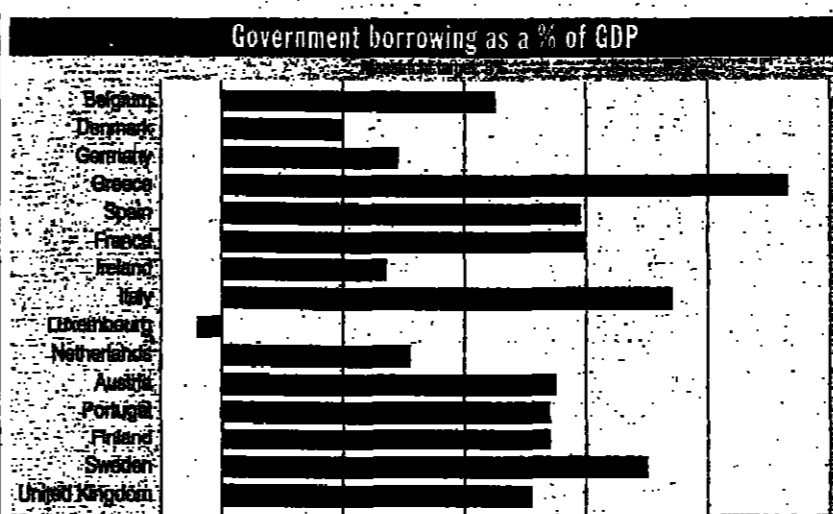
Why should the Germans damage so seriously the Europe they love with these two demands? The first demand they cannot help. Public opinion is in revolt. The second demand was pure muddle-headedness.

European politicians have been intoning for so long that widening and deepening are not contradictory that they forgot it was nonsense. Of course it is. Only the British government acknowledged that clearly, but was happy to go along with widening because it does not want deepening, anyway.

The upshot will be a two-tier monetary system with some states in a common currency area and many outside. Now, suppose unemployment stays high in Europe. Suppose further that there is a shock to the system and many of the fringe currencies devalue.

Neither supposition takes much imagination. The French (who must be in the inner circle) get annoyed about "competitive devaluation" and slap quotas on Spanish and Italian farm imports. The Italians, already angry about being excluded from the inner circle, retaliate. The whole single market shivers to destruction.

Far-fetched? Not very. Historical patterns have a way of repeating themselves. Come the 2010s, Europe might look much as it did in the 1950s with a hard-core EU of five or six states and a free-trade Efta-ish fringe around.



It is not even clear that the French, for example, would care. They would have what they want: Germany tied into a West-European grouping with France.

If nobody else wants that, however, what to do? Mr Major implies monetary union must be postponed until everyone who wants to go in is "ready". But French and German politicians are afraid they will miss the tide for ever if they delay. Oh, dear. It sounds as if we need a fixed exchange rate system for countries left outside EMU.

The merest suggestion provokes howls of scorn: what about black Wednesday? Didn't ERM prove that adjustable peg systems are unstable with free capital markets? Maybe, but what's the alternative?

Moreover, ERM, like Bretton Woods before it, lasted about 13 years before cracking up. That might be enough to get the Germans over their DM-fixation.

What's needed is a bit of salesmanship. The inner core, the Euro currency area will

be using the Euro. Everyone else will be on a Euro standard. As under the old gold standard, the other currencies will be backed by a reserve asset - then gold, now Euros.

In order to retain that backing, each country must respect certain "rules of the game". In effect its central bank would ensure that its liabilities were balanced by Euro assets and it would surrender its monetary policy to the European Central Bank. However, it would retain its own currency and, at the limit, the power to devalue - just as countries were always able to change the gold price of their currency.

If a currency came under pressure, domestic interest rates could rise very high, since the local central bank could not bail out the money market. The only alternative would be for the European Central Bank to tackle the speculation head-on by buying large amounts of the currency for Euros.

This it would do, so long as the country in question was meeting certain conditions.

If the country's inflation was low, its foreign balance not too far in the red and the economy was not hopelessly depressed, the ECB should be ready to shoot the moon in defence of the fixed peg.

Since the ECB can supply as many Euros as the market may desire, that should be good enough. The point is the countries themselves are responsible for their own good behaviour; the ECB then shields them from de-stabilising speculation. What's the catch? Simply this. In effect, the ECB would be running monetary policy not just for the Euro currency area but for Europe, the Euro-backed zone, as a whole. That means it must look at indicators for the whole Euro zone, not just the ECU.

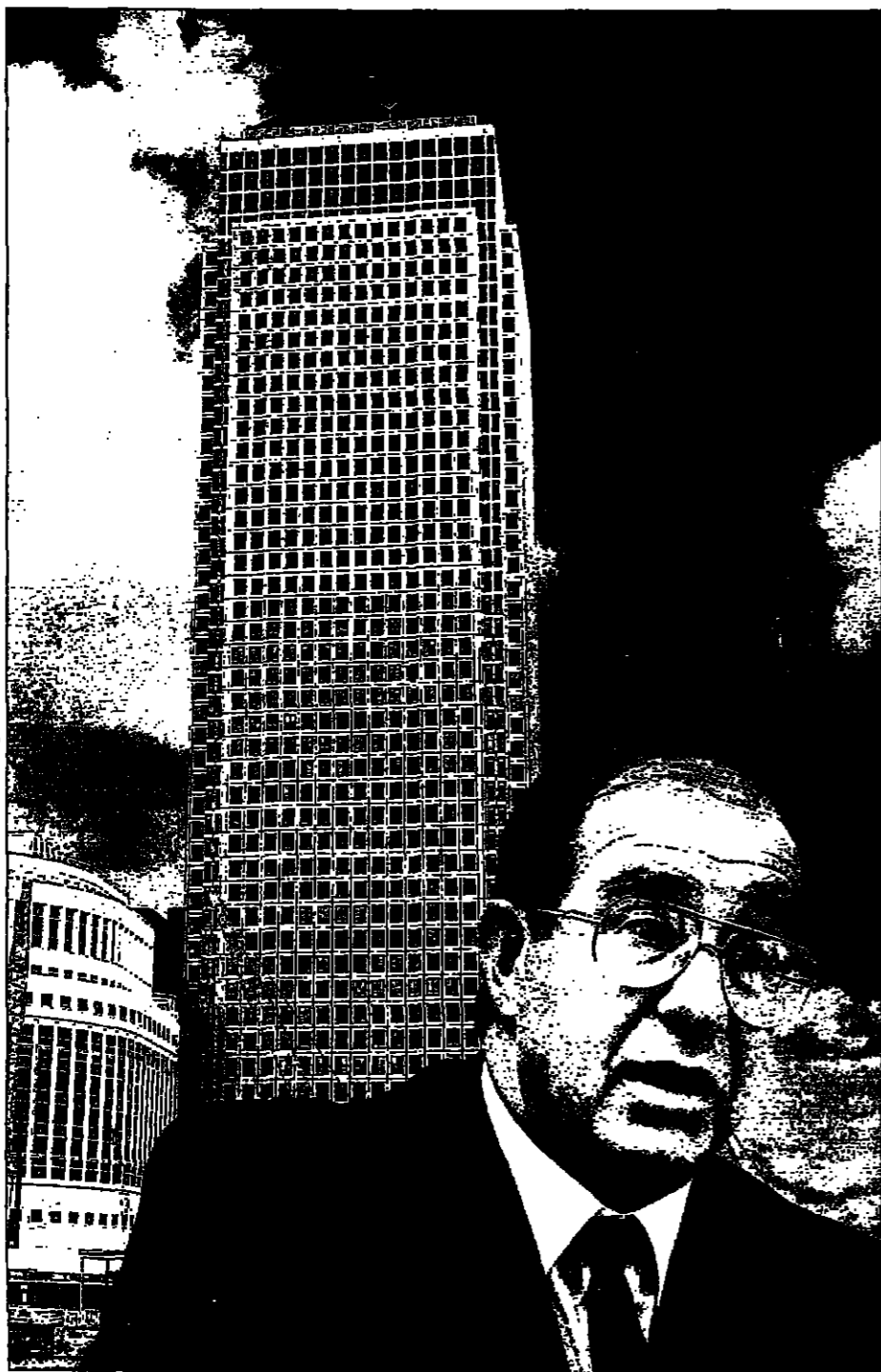
If it has a money supply rule it must be one for the whole Euro zone. Suppose, for example, the ECU money supply were growing fast but the weighted average money supplies of other Euro-based currencies were growing slowly, the ECB would have to smile and not tighten policy. Speculative movements out of sterling, peseta and lira into Euros would have just that effect, after all.

So the Germans cannot disembarass themselves of neighbours such as the Italians by excluding them from the ECU. If Europe is to survive they must embrace them, anyway.

This does not mean that the Euro has to be weakened. But it must be run sensitively in the interests of the whole area and in discussion with associated central banks. The only alternative is free floating and a bust-up sooner or later.

You don't believe that German and French bankers will have the wisdom and breadth of vision to do that? I am not sure they have myself, which is why I used the word crisis.

The writer is director of the IPPR



Scaling the heights: Sir Peter Levene who was called in to save Canary Wharf from bankruptcy and is now considering options in the City and in industry

Rescuer of Canary Wharf gets ready to take wing again

Sir Peter Levene is considering his options for new employment having completed a two-year stint as chief executive of Canary Wharf, the London property development. While he will probably continue as a personal adviser to the Prime Minister on efficiency issues, he has not yet decided whether he will take up another large job in the City or industry.

People close to him at Canary Wharf say his best qualities are his abilities in sales and marketing. He says they were at a premium when he took the helm at Canary Wharf in December 1993 as it came out of administration.

Sir Peter said: "In the beginning, Canary Wharf was a very high quality development, put up on what was previously wasteland. The people who built it did a very good job and that the project didn't succeed was a great disappointment. It was the largest development in Europe and that it turned into a failure was bad for London's prestige as well as the money and the effort that had been wasted."

Sir Peter now reckons that people accept Canary Wharf as an asset, an important business district to rank alongside the West End and the City.

"The two things that killed it were the recession, when no one was taking space anywhere, and the idea that you couldn't get there. Now the recession has lifted and road and rail links are in, and the Jubilee underground extension will be terrific."

Sir Peter originally became involved in Canary Wharf in 1991 when the Government asked him to sort out the Docklands Light Railway, then Canary Wharf's only real link with the

"I was never a property guru. Collecting rent is not what I want to do for the rest of my life"

centre of London. As chairman of the DLR, Sir Peter gradually turned the disaster around and at the same time got to know Paul Reichmann, one of the three Reichmann brothers who developed Canary Wharf.

Mr Reichmann asked Sir Peter to take over the running of Canary Wharf before the general election of April 1992 but he refused.

He said that while the development had been well built it was already too late to save it from some form of bankruptcy. The key error that the Reichmanns made was to bring in North Americans to run the scheme, executives who failed to get with the English way of doing things, according to Sir Peter.

The project went into administration and at the end of 1993 the 11 banks that had taken over the ownership asked Sir Peter to take over as chief executive and refloat the business out of bankruptcy.

Sir Peter recalls that for the first two to three months he was solely employed in going around the development asking people what their concerns were. He says there was a lack of shops and people and that the infrastructure was lacking. The most important thing to change was public perceptions, he says.

By November 1993 road and DLR links had been completed but there was a long time-lag between their completion and the public waking up to the fact that Canary Wharf was acces-

sible. It was an uphill struggle, he remembers. He embarked on a round of corporate visits in an attempt to persuade potential tenants and opinion-formers that Canary Wharf was a viable place to work.

He recalls a chicken-and-egg situation. The large employers complained that there were no restaurants, while the restaurant owners complained that there weren't any people.

Sir Peter said: "This is why the arrival of Tesco has been so terribly important. It is providing a service for 14,000 who work at Canary Wharf. Marks & Spencer were playing with the idea of coming here for ages, but decided not to go ahead - one of their biggest mistakes. There are now over 50 shops and restaurants here."

Sir Peter identifies the arrival of BZW, Morgan Stanley and Tesco about a year ago as the turning point for him. While he always thought the project would work, it happened a lot quicker than he and the banks expected. When he took over, the banks' recovery plan forecast that they would not get all their money back until the year 2007. In the event, Mr Reichmann came back with a new consortium of investors to buy back the scheme from the banks for £800m, a deal completed just before the new year.

With the recovery from the

depths of the recession, Canary Wharf has succeeded in attracting tenants. It has gone from being only half-let when Sir Peter took over to over 80 per cent let now.

Sir Peter admits many of the early tenants were attracted by generous rent-free periods. He says that, with the new demand for space in Canary Wharf, this has decreased.

When he took over, there was a 40 per cent difference between rents in the City and the West End and those in Canary Wharf. This has narrowed to 20 per cent.

There has been an acrimonious row between Sir Peter and the Corporation of the City of London, with the Corporation accusing Canary Wharf of attempting to poach key financial institutions from the Square Mile. Sir Peter has always been emollient on the subject, and

says, "I hope that this big argument with the City will dissipate. I said at the beginning that it was an over-stated problem, and I still believe that. Operations that want to be 100 yards from the Bank of England will stay there. Canary Wharf is complementary to the City."

Paul Reichmann asked Sir Peter to carry on as head of Canary Wharf but he felt he had completed his job. "I think I've done what I wanted to do. I was never a property guru. Collecting rent is not what I want to do for the rest of my life. Canary Wharf was a disaster and has been put back on its feet."

Sir Peter's name has been linked by the City rumour mill with the succession to the chairmanship of GEC, but he has refused to speculate on his future. However, as a past head of procurement for the Ministry of Defence he is obviously well suited. As the architect of the rescue of Western Europe's largest property development he can obviously take his pick of a wide range of lucrative offers.

John Willcock

Murdoch lands a plum role ahead of the election

A political storm is brewing over 20th Century Fox's plan for a studio in the heart of Sydney

When Australians welcomed 1996 in earthy style, with fireworks over Sydney Harbour and revellers hurling beer cans at hapless policemen along Bondi Beach, they also ushered in the year of a general election. Paul Keating, the Prime Minister, is expected to call a poll as early as March, seeking an unprecedented sixth term for the ruling Labor Party.

The campaign will focus irredeemably on Labor's economic management after 13 years in power. But it is also likely to highlight the government's relationship with one of Australia's most powerful men, possibly even more powerful than Mr Keating himself: Rupert Murdoch.

Mr Murdoch spent the Christmas-new year holidays as a crew member on *Savannah*, the United States yacht that won the annual ocean-going yacht race between Sydney and Ho-

burt, Tasmania. While he was at sea, a political storm was raging on shore over a deal stitched together a year ago between Mr Keating and Mr Murdoch to allow the media tycoon to build a film studio in Sydney for 20th Century Fox, the Hollywood production company owned by Mr Murdoch's News Corporation.

The row focuses as much on the proposed studio's site in central Sydney as it does on the Labor government's manner of doing business with Mr Murdoch in an election year. He controls almost 70 per cent of Australia's newspapers and one of two cable television networks.

The proposed location is the Sydney showgrounds, a 27-hectare site that has been the home of the Royal Agricultural Society for 114 years. For most of that time, the society has staged the annual Royal Easter Show there, an elaborate display of agricultural wealth.

With the society planning to move location next year, the question has been raging over what to do with such a prime piece of public land. The showgrounds form part of wider parklands that Lachlan Macquarie, one of Australia's most visionary colonial governors,

dedicated in 1811 "for the benefit of all present and succeeding inhabitants of Sydney".

The question at the centre of the row is: would a Fox film studio fit such a definition? Many are sceptical. The New South Wales state Labor government, a political ally of Mr Keating, has gone ahead with the Fox proposal without calling other tenders.

Fox would be handed almost the entire site, at a peppercorn rent for 50 years, leaving no land for public use. To make the studio pay its way, there have been suggestions that Fox would incorporate a movie theme park, something that has caused uproar among inner-Sydney residents.

A group have formed Save the Showgrounds for Sydney Inc, hired lawyers and won a restraining order against Mr Murdoch and the state government until a full challenge is heard in the Land and Environment Court this month.

Australian film-makers, keen to see movie sound stages built in Sydney, are wary of the Fox plan. Many believe Mr Murdoch wants to use the studio to churn out American-based

"product" for his world-wide television network rather than give access to Australian productions.

The 18 Australian feature films shot in 1994 had total budgets of A\$45m (£20m); small beer compared with the average Hollywood budget. John Maynard and John Wiley, two Australian producers, said in a recent article: "Each

new admission by Fox makes it more obvious that the development is not driven by the needs and priorities of the Australian film-making community. Along with many of our colleagues, we believe it will be culturally damaging and divisive and that ultimately, if there are any benefits, they will accrue to the shareholders of Fox."

With appeals to Australian nationalism so much at the centre of Mr Keating's strategies, the Fox row would seem to open a window for the opposition Liberal-National coalition to make political capital.

But with an election around the corner, and Mr Murdoch's newspapers playing such an influential role, both sides of politics are holding their breaths. John Howard, the opposition

leader, has said nothing about the Fox controversy. He has yet to reveal the details of his main policies. When he does, an attack on the expanding empire of Mr Murdoch, however much public disquiet that causes, is unlikely to be among them.

The opposition leads the government in opinion polls, but Mr Keating has overtaken Mr Howard in recent months in polls for preferred prime minister. Voters see Mr Howard as honest but weak; they regard Mr Keating as untrustworthy but strong and tough.

If anything, Mr Keating is facing a more favourable economic climate for the 1996 campaign than he did three years ago. In 1993, the press wrote him off and branded that election as "unwinnable" because of his personal unpopularity as the finance minister who had taken Australia into the recession of the early Nineties. Now, the economy is growing at 3.5 per cent and inflation is easing. The share market closed last year 15 points higher than 1994.

Business leaders have criticised Mr Keating's government for failing to push through harder micro-economic reforms on the labour market, transport and waterfront. Overall,

though, business has learned to live well with the Labor government. "It's very pragmatic and not driven by ideological objectives," said Ian Spicer, managing director of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "It has moved increasingly to the centre. To that extent, business has had a reasonably good relationship with the government."

The Murdoch factor remains the wild card. Late last year, Mr Murdoch unreservedly supported the government by describing the Australian economy as "a disgrace", citing the high rate of youth unemployment.

Mr Murdoch will be demanding more than just land for his Fox studio from whoever wins the election.

He will be seeking, as well, a complete revamp of cross-media ownership laws that set strict limits on television ownership for newspaper barons.

Michael Gordon-Smith, executive producer of the Screen Producers' Association of Australia, appealed for caution. "Mr Murdoch and his companies have an enviable capacity to influence the rules of government - or to find ways to circumvent them."

Robert Milliken

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PREMIER LEAGUE: Dons' New Year hangover ■ Time stands still at Highfield Road ■ Finn becomes youngest Premiership player

Ferguson blows away Everton's cobwebs

CLIVE WHITE

Wimbledon 2
Everton 3

It may have been the first day of the year, but it was the last day on which you would expect to find a Scotsman – particularly one who goes by the nickname of Duncan Disorderly – so bright-eyed and bushy-tailed.

The hangover looked all right as Ferguson, starting only his second game since his release from prison, scored two goals in two minutes after setting up Everton's opener in just 28 seconds. With just 25 minutes gone that would have been curtains for most teams, yet such is the indefatigable spirit of the Dons that they clawed their way back into the game and would have snatched a point but for a marvellous late save by Neville Southall.

They were Ferguson's first goals of a season hitherto notable only for his notoriety and it would be nice to think he was turning over a new leaf here with a compelling performance. Famed for his heading power, it was his dexterity with the ball at his feet which caught the eye in this match.

Had Everton, and in particular Paul Rideout, taken full advantage of his unselfish support play, they would not have been forced to endure such a harrowing finale. Joe Royle, the Everton manager, however, was loathed to give too much publicity to a young man who has commanded more than his fair share of it of late. "It's not the Duncan Ferguson side-show," he said. "We played very well. He put two goals away which he's there for. He's a long, long way from full fitness."

Everton will be praying that the result of the judiciary appeal against the remaining seven matches of his 12-match ban goes in their favour on 19 January. Everton have a momentum going now – only two defeats in 11 games – and while they are able to compensate for the loss of the likes of Anders Limpar and Craig Short, Ferguson provides them with an extra dimension and a focal point.

It cannot be often that Wimbledon have feared the opposition's muscle, but Ferguson was an intimidating sight as he broke free from Chris Perry's tackle in the early seconds. Brain took over from brown as he pulled the ball back from the by-line for Rideout to shoot and John Ebbrell to score on the rebound.



Running the line: Everton's Graham Stuart (left) is harried by Dean Holdsworth, the Wimbledon striker, at Selhurst Park yesterday

Photograph: Peter Jay

After about 20 minutes, Everton could have been at least three goals up but for profligate finishing by Graham Stuart. Barry Horne and Rideout. Five minutes later that was exactly the margin they did enjoy. Matthew Jackson's diagonal ball into the box was neither to feet nor head, so Ferguson

trapped it with his thigh and then volleyed it over his shoulder without the ball coming to earth until Hans Segers picked it out of the net.

Spectacular gave way to mere clinical efficiency as two minutes later David Unsworth's cross was swept home with contemptuous ease by the Scot.

It was a sobering experience for Wimbledon, coming on the back of two "derby" wins at Chelsea and Arsenal. But home comforts have been conspicuous by their absence this season and one has to go back to 9 September to find their last win at Selhurst Park, coincidentally against the other Merseysiders.

However, with Marcus Gayle substituting for the ever-threatening Mick Harford, Joe Kinneir's side were a completely different proposition after half-time.

Within nine minutes of the restart, Dean Holdsworth had headed what was surely a consolation goal, we thought, but

a second from Efan Ekoku after 72 minutes put an entirely different complexion on matters.

By then, Everton might have been reduced to 10 men for the second game in succession as Dave Watson tripped Gayle in an arguably goal-scoring position. The referee, Alan Wilkie, chose

the softer option and went for a booking and Everton saw out the siege.

Wimbledon (4-4-2): Segers; Cunningham (Earl, 88), Reeves, Perry, Kinnear; Earle, Leach, Holdsworth, Stuart, Holdsworth, Harford (Gayle, 71), Southall. Substitutes not used: Pearce, Everton (4-4-2-1-1): Southall; Jackson, Watson, Parfitt, Unsworth; Kanchelskis (Pinnock, 77), Ebbrell, Horne, Stuart, Rideout; Ferguson. Substitutes not used: O'Connor, Hoverton (6).

Referee: A. Wilkie (Chester-le-Street).

Whelan keeps Coventry rolling

MIKE ROWBOTTOM

Coventry City 1
Southampton 1

Noel Whelan is wasting no time in establishing himself at Highfield Road. The former Leeds forward, signed for a club-record £2m last month, left the pitch to the chant of his own name yesterday after earning a point for his perilously placed team seven minutes from time.

Whelan's third goal in successive games produced a roar which mingled joy with disbelief after he had run from the half-way line and half dribbled, half staggered past six defenders before rolling the ball inside Dave Beasant's left-hand post.

Coventry's subsequent surge for a winner was abruptly checked when the referee, Keith Cooper of Pontypridd – to general consternation – blew for time with only 88 minutes showing on the electric display. After a consultation with his linesmen witnessed by a crowd of players from both sides, he sheepishly accepted his error and restarted the game for a further one minute and 35 seconds.

It had not been time, but last orders. And as the final drops of the afternoon drained away, Whelan was almost in for a late double as a dubious backpass from Richard Hall was taken off his toe by Beasant, the Southampton goalkeeper.

"I think the referee started the New Year well," said Dave Merrington, the Southampton manager. "The only thing you want is for him to get a new watch." At least it makes a change from new glasses.

Until Whelan's moment of startling enterprise, Southampton – despite lacking Matthew Le Tissier with a calf injury – appeared in control of a largely dire game thanks to their five-man midfield.

Apart from a 35th-minute header from Whelan which hit the post, the visitors restricted Southampton to hitting and hoping, and three points seemed to be heading their way after Neil Heaney had given them the lead after 67 minutes, sidefooting home unmarked at the near post after Alan Neilson had knocked on Jim Magilton's short corner.

Merrington was dismayed at the way his team had failed to defend adequately against Whelan's run. Ron Atkinson, the Coventry manager, was understandably thrilled by it. "I don't think you will see a better goal all season," he said. "It looked like he went past 12 players."

Mr Cooper will indeed be seeking a new watch, if not two. "I had a new one for Christmas and the stop watch on it didn't work," he admitted. "I always carry two watches and so I double-checked the other, but that was obviously wrong as well. It's never happened to me before and I hope it never does again."

Coventry City (4-4-2): Ogden; M. Hall, Shaw, Buxton, Pocher; Taylor (Lampard, 67), Williams, Richardson, Salter; Whelan, Dusan. Substitutes not used: Beasant, Flett (6).

Southampton (4-5-1): Beasant; Charlton (Beal, 63), P. Hall, Morison, Heaney, Henry, Modest, Vernon, Magilton, Dooker, Shipperley. Substitutes not used: Hughes, Gills (4).

Referee: K. Cooper (Pontypridd).

Redknapp is riled by goalkeeping controversy

ALAN NIXON

Manchester City 2
West Ham United 1

Neil Finn was 17 just three days ago, his jersey was obviously designed for someone else and hastily printed numbers on his back had peeled off long before the final whistle. A case for Children In Need, never mind the charity of the Premier League.

However, the West Ham manager, Harry Redknapp, revealed that he had been forced to field the rookie goalkeeper, thus making him the youngest

player in the club's history, because of red-tape officialdom from HQ.

Redknapp was already without the suspended Ludek Miklosko and lost Les Sealey to a freak training injury when he ripped his calf muscle on New Year's Eve.

Frantic calls to the League led them to the golf course and mobile phone of the Premier secretary, Mike Foster, who was in no mood to oblige.

Redknapp could not conceal his anger as he said: "I asked for permission to loan a keeper and they said I would have to field an outfield player

instead. We had some trouble getting the guy from the league, he was playing golf and he must have missed a few puts because he said 'no'.

"I told them there would be 30,000 people at Maine Road and that they would be making a farce of the game. The ruling is that it is at their discretion. It's not as if I was trying to loan Sean or Flowers, but they would still not allow it. I can't believe that they could not show some common sense. I am sure Alan Ball would have allowed it."

Finn, called up from Rainham at short notice, was even carrying a hamstring injury.

However, City extended the season of goodwill and almost treated the young man with kid gloves. Their embarrassment turned to frustration and then anger as they failed to take advantage of a stricken foe.

Niall Quinn headed two efforts at the target, a soft one that was caught and prompted a chorus of "England's No 1" from the away support. Nicky Sumner and Uwe Rösler missed easier attempts.

When Quinn strode through the offside trap, neatly chipped the onrushing youngster and stroked home in the 22nd minute, it should have been the

beginning of an afternoon's stroll. Things do not work out that way at Maine Road.

Marc Rieper had a goal disallowed when his header was adjudged to have been a foul and Steve Lomas had a 25-yard shot similarly chalked off before half-time.

The referee, Mike Reed, ruled that Rieper had unfairly challenged City's Kit Symons, but Redknapp insisted: "It was a perfect goal. I've seen the video and Marc timed his jump perfectly."

Julian Dicks led by example in the second half with a 25-yard free-kick that was saved low by

Eike Immel, who was relieved to see Keith Curle head a Dicks effort from the subsequent corner off the line.

Hammers' persistence and City's negligence led to an equaliser. A deep cross from Dicks was missed by Ian Brightwell, and Iain Dowie thumped home from 10 yards.

Following the substitution of Rösler in the 77th minute Quinn was left on his own and out of the proverbial blue came a winner three minutes later when City finally attacked the box with conviction.

Kit Symons crossed, substitute Ronnie Ekelund volleyed,

the ball hit Quinn and wing-footed Finn. As the teenager lay on his back, Quinn gratefully forced home the rebound from the post.

Ball, the City manager, admitted: "It was not the best of performances. It left me a bit empty. Quality of ball in the last third was shocking. We hit things too flat and with no conviction to put people under pressure."

Manchester City (3-5-2): Imms; Symons, Curle, (Brightwell), Sumner, Lomas, Pinnock (Ekelund, 57), Kanchelskis, Brown, Rieper (Pinnock, 77), Quinn. Substitutes not used: Coton (6).

West Ham United (4-5-1): Finn; Harkes, Rieper, Potts, Dicks, Slater, Williams (Hutchinson, 63), Brown, Morison, Hughes, Dooks. Substitutes not used: Rowland, Conner.

Referee: M. Reed (Birmingham).

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE: South Londoners resist Pompey's late surge as leaders Derby display their pomp in difficult circumstances

Martyn clings on to Palace's points

ROUND-UP

PAUL NEWMAN

Crystal Palace maintained their recent improvement when they resisted Portsmouth's late challenge to secure a 3-2 victory in an enthralling match at Fratton Park yesterday.

Palace have made a habit of throwing away sizeable leads this season and despite going 3-0 ahead early in the second half they needed a string of fine saves by Nigel Martyn in the final minutes to secure victory.

David Hopkin, who scored twice, and Dougie Freedman, who netted after a solo run which took him past three defenders, had put Palace 3-0 up within 49 minutes, but Guy Butters and Fitzroy Simpson restored Portsmouth's hopes and only a stunning diving save by Martyn in injury-time denied John Durnin.

Port Vale had the better of the first hour at Ipswich, but ran out 5-1 losers on a treacherous surface at Portman Road. Two goals in a minute started Vale's downfall, Simon Milton and Steve Sedgley both scoring after good work by Alex Mathie, who went on to score twice in the last seven minutes. Ian Mar-

shall was Ipswich's other scorer, while Tony Naylor scored a consolation goal for Vale.

Southend extended their unbeaten league run to nine matches with a goalless draw at home to Barnsley, while Tranmere lost for the sixth time in seven matches, Trevor Morley scoring the only goal of the game for Reading 11 minutes from time.

Huddersfield drew 1-1 at Grimsby thanks to a controversial penalty 14 minutes from time by Ronnie Jepson, who scored on the rebound after Paul Crichton blocked his first shot. Grimsby players had begged the referee, Terry Heilbron, after he had awarded the spot kick following a challenge by Mark Lever on Jepson. Steve Livingstone scored Grimsby's goal after 32 minutes.

Blackpool maintained their challenge for promotion from the Second Division when Dave Linighan scored their winner in a 2-1 victory at Carlisle only 30 seconds from time.

A 22nd minute header by Leo Fortune-West gave Gillingham victory at Leyton Orient and put the visitors back on top of the Third Division. The biggest crowd of the season so far in the Third Division, 12,427,



Morley: Late winner

saw Ian Baird salvage a point for Plymouth Argyle with two second-half goals in the local derby at home to Exeter, while Andy Saville took his tally for the season to 18 with two goals in Preston's 5-0 win at home to Cardiff.

Bury conceded their first goal in 729 minutes when Keith Houchen gave Hartlepool the lead and worse was to follow. Stephen Halliday and Ian McGuckin completed a 3-0 win, Hartlepool's first at Gigg Lane and Bury's first defeat in nine matches.

Torquay have now gone 14 matches without a win after Simon Betts gave Colchester a 3-2 win at Plainmoor with an injury-time goal. Mark Kinsella had scored the fastest goal of the day to put Colchester in front.

Official sees red over Megson's full-blooded plea

JON CULLEY

Derby County 2
Norwich City 1

After nine wins in 10 matches, Derby's celebrations carried lofty expectations as their lead stretched to seven points at the head of the First Division. However, it took a last-gasp goal by Marco Gabbiadini to keep the party alive, leaving Norwich feeling more than a shade unlucky.

To make matters worse for the East Anglian side, manager Gary Megson is likely to have

to answer for his conduct following a half-time confrontation with the referee, Jim Rushton, who ordered Megson to leave the dug-out for the second half.

The Stoke official is to report Megson, whose complaints stemmed from an unfortunate sequence of events which led to Norwich going a goal behind in the 37th minute, with only nine men on the field. Spencer Prior was carried off with an ankle injury and while Megson was in the dressing-room seeking to discover whether Prior might return, team-mate Shaun Carey was ordered from the field by

the referee to be treated for a head injury, sustained earlier, which was bleeding heavily.

"I was upset with the referee over the timing of his decision," Megson said. "We had been hoping to nurse Carey through to half time. He had been bleeding for 20 minutes and I couldn't understand why the referee waited until we were down to 10 men before telling him to leave the field."

It was easy to sympathise with Megson's predicament, although he could be criticised for not having acted himself to attend to Carey's injury, which required 12

stitches. Derby needed only a minute to take advantage of the confusion. Sean Flynn setting up Ron Willemans to nod home his 11th goal of the season.

In the event, the changes worked initially to Norwich's advantage, forcing Megson to abandon a five-man midfield and push substitute Robert Fleck into a front-line role. Looking more ambitious, the visitors drew level after 63 minutes. Fleck diving to head home the rebound after Robert Ulfathorne's drive came back off a post.

From that point, Norwich looked the better side. However,

Fleck squandered two chances within 12 minutes of his goal and was thwarted by Russell Hout, diving to save at full stretch, with five minutes remaining.

A draw would have been a fair outcome but, with scarcely a minute to go, Willemans flicked on Paul Simpson's right-wing corner and Gabbiadini rose at the far post to provide a dramatic final twist.

Derby County (3-4-3): Hout; Yates, Stevens, Potts, Carey (Duggan, 85), Van der Luen (Simpson, 73), Powell, Nicholson; Gabbiadini (Wright, 90), Willemans, Flynn.

Norwich City (4-5-1): Carr; Smith, Pollock, Prior (Newman, 37), Bowyer, Adams, Goss, Carey (Fleck, 35), Ulfathorne, O'Neill (Mallin, 86); Ward.

Referee: J. Rushton (Stoke-on-Trent).

Millwall leave Leicester rueing their profligacy

TIM COLLINGS

Millwall 1
Leicester City 1

Martin O'Neill's hopes of securing his first win since succeeding Mark McGhee in the Leicester hot-seat ended in cold frustration at the New Den yesterday.

Millwall, despite trailing to a well-taken goal against superior opponents, reorganised themselves and raised their game sufficiently to steal a draw, which did little for either sides' promotion ambitions.

On a chilly, damp and misty afternoon, it was hardly a just outcome and O'Neill had every reason to bemoan the failings of his forwards, who threw away a series of clear openings.

Millwall, searching for their first win in nine games, barely deserved a point, although there was much never-say-die spirit about their second-half offensive. Harry Cripps, the defender who embodied the club's spirit and who died last week, was remembered with a minute's silence before the start and would have had no complaints.

Even when finding their touch deserting them, Millwall

played positively and in pursuit of a victory, but a ragged and error-strewn performance punctuated by six bookings left their manager, Mick McCarthy, with little to enjoy.

Leicester controlled the opening period with ease. Mike Whitlow created a good opening after 19 minutes, but both Emilie Heskey and Iwan Roberts failed to make contact and this set the tone.

Scott Taylor missed from close range two minutes later and Leicester wobbled for a period as it seemed they could not score. But with only seconds remaining before the interval,

the Australian midfielder, Steve Corica, put them ahead with his second goal of the season and the first since returning from a broken leg. It was well conceived and taken, Corica playing a one-two off Whitlow before planting a firm shot beyond the Millwall goalkeeper, Kasey Keller.

Millwall copied Leicester's 5-3-2 system after the break and it paid off as they gained more possession. They drew level after 65 minutes when Chris Malkin headed in powerfully from the far post from a Bobby Bowry cross for his ninth goal of the season. They pressed hard

for a winner, but Leicester, exploiting the gaps they left at the back, should really have won comfortably.

Their counter-attacking supplied Roberts, Taylor and substitutes Julian Joachim and David Lowe with easy chances which were wasted. Lowe's miss, from close range, was the worst, but typified Leicester's wanton approach towards their finishing.

Millwall (4-4-2): Nelson; Newman, Webster, Wright, Thatcher, Lunn, Bowry (Taylor, 63), Roe, Bowry, Malkin, Odon (Flynn, 87). Substitutes not used: Forbes.

Leicester City (5-3-2): Poole; Grayson, Royle, Lowe, 64; Heskey, Whitlow, 73; Roberts, Substitutes not used: Houghton, 86; Roberts.

Referee: N. Barry (Southampton).

SPORT



CRICKET

Malcolm returns for fifth Test as Illingworth gambles

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RUGBY LEAGUE

Wigan are made to wait for the Championship

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FOOTBALL: Liverpool reiterate their championship aspirations by staging a remarkable fightback after falling two goals behind

Collymore the centre of attention

GUY HODGSON

Liverpool 4
Nottingham Forest 2

Nottingham Forest's players never went overboard to celebrate a Stan Collymore goal even when he was a colleague, so it can safely be assumed his performance for Liverpool yesterday will not have had the visiting dressing-room emitting many noises on the "nice to see you're doing well" line.

Given his £5.5m move between the clubs, attention was bound to focus on Collymore. Twice he provided crosses for Robbie Fowler to pounce and

with the script line heading in his favour, he supplied the denouement, getting Liverpool's third and forcing Colin Cooper to concede a fourth with an own goal.

It was a victory savoured at Anfield for more than the chance to throw the "what a waste of money" chant back at the visiting supporters. Going 2-0 down to opponents as obdurate as Forest usually makes the result a foregone conclusion. To prise a win from such an unpromising position restores belief in a championship campaign.

"Stan Collymore is a good player, we know that," Frank Clark, the Forest manager said. "And if you give him as much room as we did, he'll hurt you."

Liverpool's black November proves they are capable of dross as well as craft, but even Doctor Jekyll would have been shaking his head at the character lurch they underwent in the first half. For 15 minutes they were appalling; for 20, breathtaking.

The former mood was more surprising, given a start in which Collymore had three headed attempts at goal. As if someone had pulled a switch, however, they stopped and by 18 minutes they were two down.

The first stemmed from a mistake by Steve McManaman, who was caught in possession by Ian Woan. The Forest winger poked the ball forward and Steve Stone swept the ball past David James, curling it beyond the goalkeeper's ungainly move to his right. Stone is already miles ahead in Radio Nottingham's sports personality of the year poll and the goal might induce a landslide.

Certainly Liverpool gave the impression of being overwhelmed when Woan side-footed in from five yards and Forest would have been 3-0 up if Woan had been similarly accurate with a close-range header after 21 minutes.

By now, Anfield had become a near silent pocket of dismay, yet from this dismal start Liverpool produced a stirring fightback. Forest should have been in command, instead they could barely get a foot to the ball.

Fowler had done little right, but when Collymore crossed after 30 minutes, his predatory instincts directed him to the near post and he stooped to head past Mark Crossley. Seven minutes later the plot was repeated. Collymore again crossing from the left and Fowler heading in his 17th goal of the season.

After a pulsating first period the second half was likely to be an anti-climax. Collymore ensured it was not. A goal to send the "Judas" chant back to the Trent frequently seemed possible and after 61 minutes it arrived, the Liverpool striker profiting from a horrible mix-up between Crossley and Steve Chettle to nip between them and score into an empty net.

If that was hard to stomach for the Forest fans, worse was to follow four minutes from time. Collymore again crossed and, as the visiting defenders looked for Fowler, Cooper slid the ball into his own goal.

Liverpool (3-3-2): James; McManaman, Stone, Hargreaves, Babb; R. Jones; McManaman, Thomas, Barnes, Collymore, Fowler. Substitutes not used: Cough, Kennedy, Pears (10). Nottingham Forest (4-4-2): Crossley; Little, Cooper, Chettle, Pearce; Stone, Bart-Williams, Hooper, Woan; Crossley, McGuffee (10), P. Jones. Substitutes not used: Phillips, Sainsbury, P. Jones (10).

Ribs take heart, page 21



In the spotlight: Stan Collymore (right) holds off the challenge of Chris Bart-Williams at Anfield yesterday

Photograph: Allsport

McStay tries to lift Celtic

Paul McStay will lead Celtic into tomorrow's Old Firm match against Rangers with a rallying call to his team-mates that it is the crucial game of their season.

McStay insists that Celtic have made giant strides over the past 12 months, but he desperately wants a New Year win at Parkhead over their great Glasgow rivals, after two defeats and one draw in their meetings so far this season.

Rangers are eight points clear of Celtic after strengthening the claim to retain the title with Saturday's 7-0 thrashing of Hibernian. Celtic do, at least, have two games in hand.

The Celtic captain said of the Old Firm game: "I think it is very crucial - and maybe that is an understatement. It's our home game and we want to go and win it. It will be the side who wants to win it more that takes the three points. The two teams are evenly matched and I think it's all about determination on the day."

Rangers have proved the hunger at this time of year for the past seven seasons. Their last New Year derby defeat came in 1988, when two Frank McAvennie goals helped Celtic to a 2-0 win and later the title.

While McStay acknowledges that Celtic have made considerable progress in the past year - when the sides met at Ibrox last January, Celtic were 17 points adrift of the champions - he knows that Celtic, who ended their six-year trophy famine with the Scottish Cup triumph

last May, have a long way to go. "The consistency is there this season which we have lacked in recent years," he said. "But we are only halfway there and the sign of a good team is to do it over a full season. I've been happy with what has happened in 1995 at the club. I think on the park there has been a dramatic turnaround."

Celtic may well have to be at their best on Wednesday against a Rangers side going for a Parkhead hat-trick. Ally McCoist's goal settled the Coca-Cola Cup quarter-final between the sides and 11 days later Rangers won 2-0 in a League game.

Rangers have scored 10 goals in their last two games. Gordon Durie, who is under pressure from talk of the signing of Nwankwo, has netted five of them. "There are players coming and going here all the time," Durie said. "I don't know if the Jariel deal is finalised or whatever, but I just need to keep playing away myself and do my best."

McCoist could be fit for a place on the Rangers bench, but Stuart McCall has been ruled out. Celtic will be without John Hughes and Peter Grant, who are both completing three-match suspensions. Hughes and Grant would have been available but for the postponements of fixtures at Raith on Boxing Day and Hearts last Saturday. Phil O'Donnell and Malcolm Mackay are likely to continue in their places.

Newcastle look to defend lead

Pavel Srnicek has two wishes as Newcastle aim to bounce back from their Old Trafford defeat against Arsenal tonight. The Czech Republic goalkeeper was beaten twice as the Premiership leaders crashed to a 2-0 defeat against their nearest rivals, Manchester United, who narrowed the gap to just four points with Saturday's win over Queen's Park Rangers.

Although Newcastle's 100 per cent unbeaten home record stretches back 10 matches, Srnicek stressed: "I want to keep a clean sheet and hope the team play with a positive attitude."

"We have tried to put the United game behind us. We

realise that everywhere we go, everyone wants to beat Newcastle. Every game is like a cup tie. We would like to put it right against Arsenal, although we know it will be difficult. They have a great defensive record away from home."

Arsenal, who suffered a surprise 3-1 home defeat against Wimbledon on Saturday, welcome back their captain Tony Adams after a stomach upset and Steve Bould, who has finished serving his suspension.

Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle manager, will be without three key players. The Northern Ireland winger Keith Gillespie has been ruled out by a thigh injury, the defender

Philippe Albert has suffered a recurrence of a knee injury and the full-back John Beresford is suspended. The central defender Steve Howey is hoping to recover from flu, but Warren Barton has been struggling with a hamstring strain.

Queen's Park Rangers are another side hoping to bounce back from an Old Trafford defeat - with Daniele Dichio desperate to succeed against Chelsea. The promising young striker scored his eighth goal of the season on Saturday and seems certain to start the London derby.

"Chelsea is a big game and they are our arch-enemies, but it means even more to me," he

revealed. "I am a Rangers lad, but a lot of my friends are Chelsea fans. I have got to go out and see them after the game. I can't do that if we get beaten. It is important to pick ourselves up after a bad Christmas. We didn't play that badly against United, but we have got to start believing in ourselves."

Mark Haley could return to the side after missing the match against United, while the OPR player-manager Ray Wilkins might also come into the reckoning after being ruled out by

a combination of flu and a nagging back injury.

"Mark did us a favour and came back earlier than he should have done," Wilkins said. "The foot injury is still there and I thought it best to give him a rest against United."

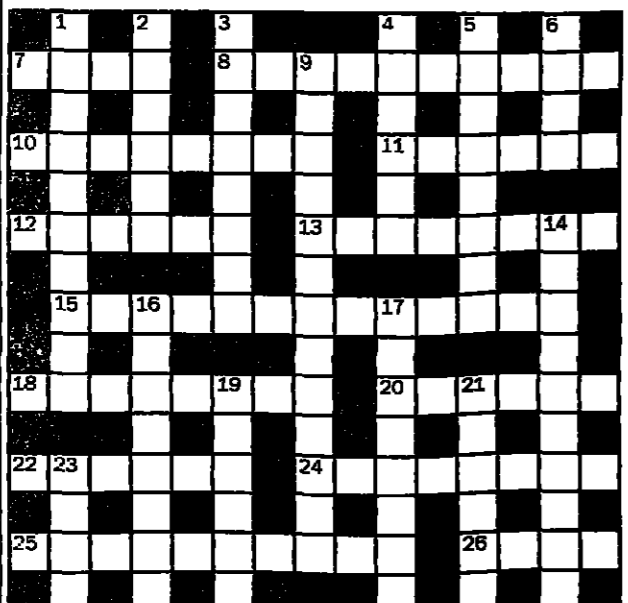
Chelsea are likely to keep faith with their striker Paul Furlong, who replaced the suspended Mark Hughes against Liverpool on Saturday, as the Welshman is still serving his ban. Andy Dow will continue at left-back if Andy Myers has not recovered from a thigh strain.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2872, Tuesday 2 January

By Asford

Monday's Solution



ACROSS
1. Fall right into dump (4)
8. Give severe treatment to hair in wrestling hold (10)
10. Objectively we will have hesitation with debts of loan shark
11. Limit scope of time and number (6)
12. But it could be us if direct (6)
13. Describing private hearing which upsets American (2,6)
15. Zapper destroys meteor with standard experiment (6,7)
18. A French male called without being asked (8)
20. Work I took in which will produce a dull effect (6)

DOWN
1. Urge prohibition on newspaper owner (5,5)
2. Allow about a second? That's far from generous (6)
3. It controls electricity supply to cook the roast (8)
4. Frenzied word of annoyance with credit reduced by 2000 (6)

5. Grandfather clock, antique? (3,5)
6. Pain makes one hot within (4)
9. In shimmering mists, La France, or part thereof? (6,7)
14. Theory of kinship? (10)
16. One sustains a blow, a letter about one's insurance (8)
17. One's upset with province that's just come into being (8)
19. Mother has to request material (6)
21. Some print activity must be unbroken (6)
23. It's said in wedding ceremony to Latin beloved (4)

Bolton fight the enemy within

PHIL ANDREWS

Sheffield Wednesday 4
Bolton Wanderers 2

If New Year is a time for reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the past, this match demonstrated exactly why Bolton go into 1996 eight points adrift at the foot of the Premiership. This was their season in microcosm: attractive football and ceaseless endeavour dashed by their own defensive frailties.

Bolton's well-known failings tempted Wednesday to experiment with just three at the back, and for a while that looked like dangerous over-confidence. Too often they seemed to be relying on the missing fourth defender to pick up the inventive Sasa Curcic, allowed to roam free in the "hole" behind his strikers.

John McGinlay was twice put clear only to shoot in haste, first tamely into Kevin Pressman's arms and then over the crossbar. Then Gerry Taggart rattled the bar from Scott Sellers' beautifully flighted free-kick and Curcic was caught marginally offside after beating Pressman.

It took a goal against the run of play to break Bolton's New Year resolution, and it came from a moment of inspiration by Chris Waddle. He seized on a loose ball on the half-way line and his pass released David Hirst, who found Darko Kovacevic unmarked in the six-yard box to head his first goal for Wednesday.

The Yugoslav added a second on the stroke of half-time. Waddle this time dispensing with the middle man to release Kovacevic with an incisive 30-yard pass. But Bolton's spirits never flagged and, five minutes after

the break, Curcic found space on the edge of the Wednesday box, glanced up and placed a rasping shot into the top corner.

Bolton's revival hopes were quickly punctured by their slack defending. Sellers brought down Andy Sinton for Hirst to restore the margin from the penalty spot, and the Wednesday striker doubled his tally on the hour after substitute Greg Strong allowed him to regain possession and sidefoot past Keith Branagan.

So when Taggart converted Sellers' corner in the 77th minute it was already too late for Bolton - as perhaps it now is for their survival prospects. Sheffield Wednesday (3-4-1-2): Pressman; Alderton, Walker, Hirst, Sinton, Sinton, Duggan, Phillips, Sinton, Todd (60mg n.v.). Curcic, Sellers, McGuffee (De Press, 75). Bolton: Substitutes not used: Hyde, Stranahan.

Bolton Wanderers (4-4-2): Branagan; Green, Stubbs, Taggart, Phillips, Sinton, Todd (60mg n.v.). Curcic, Sellers, McGuffee (De Press, 75). Bolton: Substitutes not used: Davison (10).

Lane conquers Frost for jackpot

Golf

England's Barry Lane landed the richest prize in golf when he beat the South African, David Frost, by two holes to take the £660,000 first prize in the Andersen Consulting World Championship at Scotsdale, Arizona, yesterday.

Lane, representing Europe, went into a three-hole lead after 25 holes of the 36-hole final of the £2.4m matchplay event. However Frost, representing the Rest of the World, clawed his way back to level the match six holes later.

Lane, whose victory moved him into the top 50 of the world rankings at No 38, regained the lead with a birdie at



Barry Lane with his trophy yesterday Photograph: AP

ninth after Frost bogeyed and conceded a 15-foot putt.

There were some uneasy moments for Lane in the afternoon, however, as he hit three bunkers in three holes and found himself putting for par while Frost putted for birdie. Frost eventually drew level on the 32nd.

In the 18-hole match for third place, the American Mark McCumber won three consecutive holes early on the back nine and easily beat Japan's Masayuki Kuramoto 4 and 3.

McCumber earned £230,000 and Kuramoto earned his biggest payday, £200,000, for finishing fourth. In Saturday's semi-finals, Lane beat Kuramoto two-up while Frost defeated McCumber 2 and 1.

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